50¢

# REAL WEST

TRUE TALES OF THE AMERICAN FRONTIER

CHARLTON PUBLICATION

MARCH '74 CDC 00174

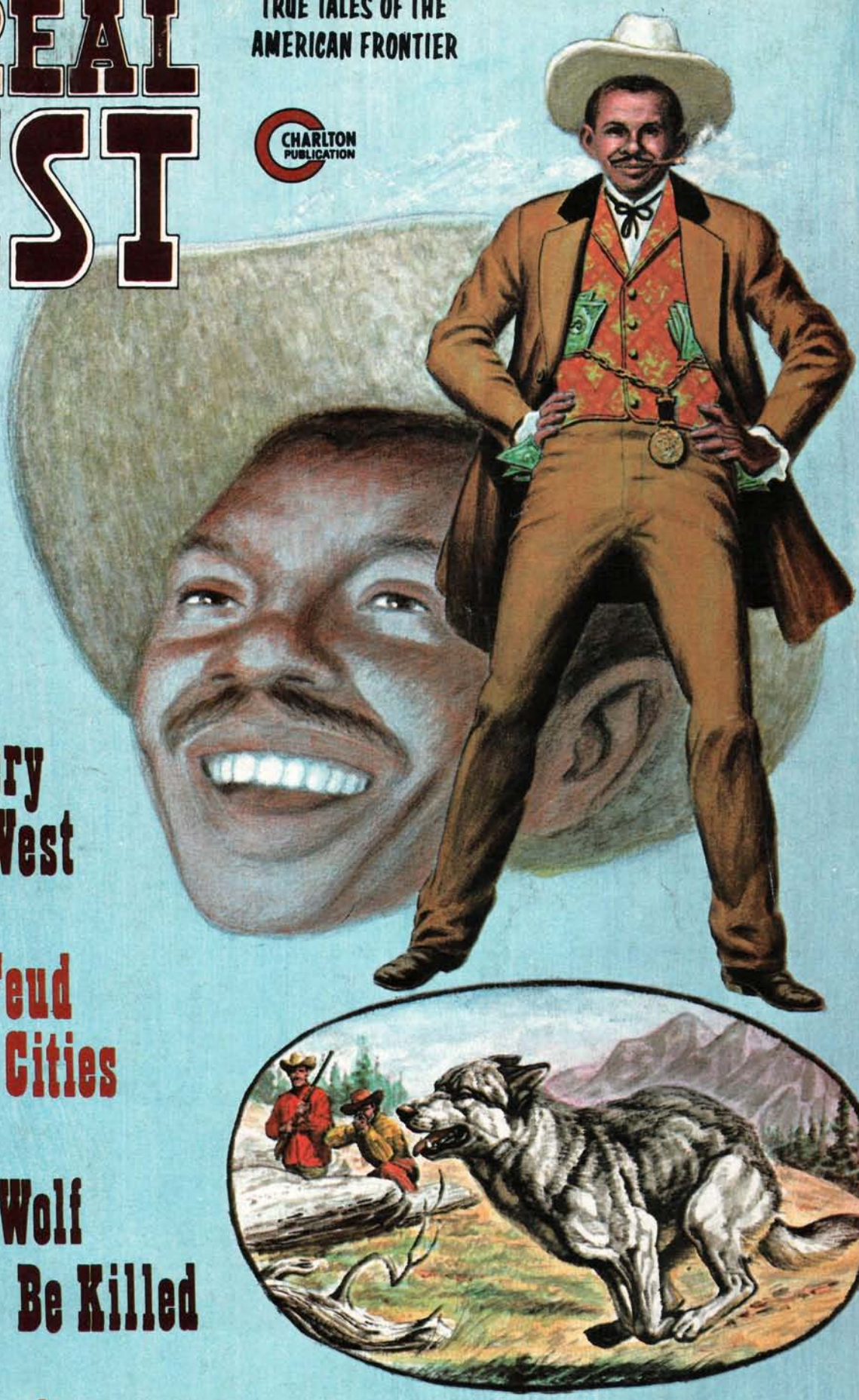
## Ben Hodges, Likeable Old Cuss of Dodge City

## Horse Thievery in the Early West

## Sensational Feud Between Two Cities

## The Montana Wolf That Couldn't Be Killed

## and many more!



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Is it true the amazing secret of TELECULT POWER

# AUTOMATICALLY BRINGS YOU ANYTHING YOU DESIRE...

**And in 10 seconds starts to draw Riches, Love, Fine Possessions, Friends, Power, Secret Knowledge, and much more into your life? See for yourself!**

**Yes, a staggering miracle has happened: A brilliant psychic researcher has discovered a secret—so powerful that it is said to bring your desires to you, from the invisible world, like a blazing streak of lightning!**

*Yes, how would you like to be able to sit in your living room, give the command for love, and instantly have your loved one appear at your side? Or give the command for money, and suddenly find a big, thick roll of dollars in your hand?•*

Now, a daring new book called TELECULT POWER lays bare this magic secret, and shows how it can bring fortune, love, and happiness. And Reese P. Dubin — the man who discovered it — makes this shocking claim . . .

## "Great Wealth And Power Can Be Yours!"

Admittedly, the concept this book proposes is completely opposed and contrary to normal human knowledge and experience. "But at this very moment," says Mr. Dubin, "I have startling proof that I want you to see with your own eyes! I want to show you . . .

- "How diamonds and jewels have appeared, seemingly out of nothingness, shortly after the use of this strange secret!"
- "How a man used this method for a pocketful of money!"
- "How a woman used it to fill an empty purse!"
- "How a farmer received a pot full of gold!"
- "How another user Teleported a gold jewel box to her, seemingly out of thin air!"
- "How a woman used this method to regain her lost youth!"
- "How a man, growing bald, claims he renewed the growth of his hair with this secret!"
- "How a woman used it to bring her mate to her, without asking!"
- "How another woman summoned a man to her —out of thin air!"
- "How a man heard the unspoken thoughts of others, with this secret!"
- "How a woman saw behind walls and over great distances, with it!"
- "How a man broadcast silent commands that others had to obey!"

Let us now clearly demonstrate to you the scientific basis behind the new wonderworking, Miracle of TELECULT POWER!

## "How Telecult Power Brings Any Desire Easily And Automatically!"

For many years, Reese P. Dubin dreamed of a way to call upon the invisible forces at work all around us. He spent a lifetime digging and searching for the secret. These investigations brought him knowledge that goes back to the dim recesses of the past.

*One day, to his astonishment, he discovered that he could actually broadcast silent commands, which others instantly obeyed. Using the secret he tells you about in this book, he tried it time after time — commanding others to sleep, get up and come to him, talk or not talk — and act according to his silent wishes. It worked every time!*

Working relentlessly from this evidence, Reese P. Dubin succeeded in perfecting a new kind of instrument — called a Tele-Photo Transmitter — that concentrates your thoughts, and sends them like a streaking bullet to their destination!

**OTHERS OBEY SILENT COMMANDS!** Writing of the success of this method, one user reports the following experience:

*"I willed her to pick up and eat a biscuit from a plate in a corner of the room. She did so. I willed her to shake hands with her mother. She rushed to her mother and stroked her hands . . .*

*"I willed her to nod. She stood still and bent her head, I willed her to clap her hands, play a note on the piano, write her name, all of which she did."*

"No one can escape the power of this method," says Mr. Dubin. "Everybody — high or low, ignorant or wise — all are subject to its spell! And unless the person is told what's being done, he will think the thoughts are his own!"

**HEARS THE THOUGHTS OF OTHERS!** Experimenting further with the Tele-Photo Transmitter, Reese P. Dubin soon found that he could "tune in" and HEAR the unspoken thoughts of others. He says, "At first, these hearing impressions startled me, and I took them for actual speech, until I realized that people don't usually say such things aloud! And their lips remained closed."

**SEES BEYOND WALLS, AND OVER GREAT DISTANCES!** Then he discovered he could pick up actual sights, from behind walls and over great distances! And when he "tuned in" he could see actual living scenes before him—as clear as the picture on a television screen!

**MAKES WOMAN APPEAR — SEEMINGLY OUT OF THIN AIR!** With mounting excitement, Reese P. Dubin launched one of the most exciting experiments in the history of psychic research. He wanted to see if the Tele-Photo Transmitter could bring him an actual material object! He chose, for this experiment, the seemingly impossible: an actual living person!

*He simply focused the Tele-Photo Transmitter, by dialing the object of his desire. In a flash the door burst open, and there — standing before him, as real as life — was his long-lost cousin!*

He stared and rubbed his eyes, and looked again! There — smiling, with arms outstretched in greeting— stood living proof of the most astounding discovery of the Century!

## Dial Any Treasure!

You'll see how to use the Tele-Photo Transmitter, to summon your desires. This special instrument — your mental equipment — requires no wires, and no electricity. "Yet," says Mr. Dubin, "it can teleport desires, swiftly from the invisible world."

*When you dial your desire—whether for riches, love, or secret knowledge—you capture its invisible, photoplasmic form, at which point "it starts to materialize!" says Dr. Dubin.*

"Telecult Power can work seeming miracles in your life," says Mr. Dubin. "With it, it is possible to dial any desire — called a Photo-Form — then sit back, relax, and watch this powerful secret go to work!"

## "Instantly Your Life Is Changed!"

With this secret, the mightiest force in the Universe is at your command! "Simply ask for anything you want," says Mr. Dubin, "whether it be riches, love, fine possessions, power, friends, or secret knowledge!"

*Suppose you had dialed Photo-Form #2 for Jewels, for example. That's what Margaret C. did, in an actual example Mr. Dubin tells you about. Rich, glittering diamonds and jewels literally appeared at her feet: a pair of gold earrings, which she found that morning . . . a surprise gift of a pearl necklace, and matching silver bracelets . . . a beautiful platinum ring set with emeralds and diamonds, dropped on her front lawn!*

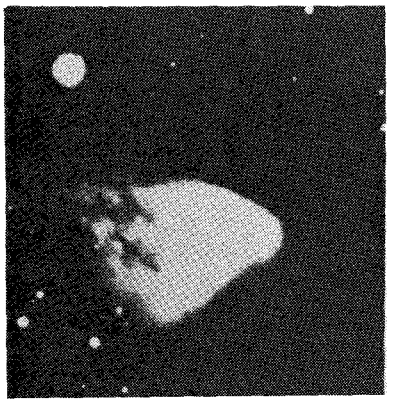
"Almost overnight," says Mr. Dubin, "it can start to multiply riches, bring romance and love . . . draw favors, gifts, new friends . . . or anything else asked for! It isn't necessary for you to understand why. What is important is that it has already worked for many others . . . men and women in all walks of life . . . worked every time . . . and it will work for you, too!"

## Brings A Pocket Full Of Money!

You'll see how Jerry D. used this method. He was broke a week before payday. All he did, he says, was to dial Photo-Form #1. Suddenly he felt a bulge in his pocket. Lo and behold! He took out a roll of money . . . fives, tens, twenties . . . and more! Obviously, it had been placed there—but when? And by whom?

## A Brand New Car Comes!

Marty C., a taxi driver, reports that he just dialed Photo-Form #4, sat back, relaxed, and waited for things to happen. In a short time, great excitement filled the house. His wife came hurrying in, saying, "We won it! We won a car and a cash prize! They just delivered it!" He got up and went to the window. There, big and beautiful,



standing in the driveway, was a brand new Cadillac!

## Brings Mate Without Asking!

Mrs. Conrad B. reports that she was tired of "pursuing" her husband, as she called it. She wanted him to voluntarily do the things she longed for, take her places, show affection. But he hadn't looked at her in years. He would fall asleep immediately after supper, or watched the ball games, or read the papers. Secretly Mrs. B. decided to try this method. She dialed Photo-Form #9 for Love! Instantly, her husband's attitude changed from boredom to interest and enthusiasm. And from that day forward, he showered her with kindness and affection! It was like a miracle come true!

## The Power Of This Method!

There are so many personal experiences which I could recount, stories of healing, wealth, and happiness with this secret, that I find myself wanting to tell all of them at once. Here are just a few . . .

- **REGAINS HAIR GROWTH!** Walter C. had a shiny bald head with just a fringe of white hair showing around the edges. He tried this method, and soon his hair began to regrow. The new hair came in thick, dark, and luxurious!
- **ROLLS DICE 50 TIMES WITHOUT MISSING ONCE!** You'll see how this secret gave Albert J. the power to roll the dice 50 times, without missing once, and—for the first time in the history of Las Vegas—walk away with $500,000!
- **DISSOLVES ALL EVIL!** You'll see how this amazing secret revealed to Lawrence M. the people who were trying to make him look silly at work—actually revealed their secret thoughts—made them confess and apologize!

If TELECULT POWER can do all this for others, what riches, what rewards, what amazing results can it also bring to you?

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# MAIL ROUNDUP

Tell It To RW, Charlton Building, Derby, Connecticut

### In Defense of Pat Garrett

Gentlemen:

In regards to Mr. Herb Book's comments on Pat Garrett in the October '73 issue of REAL WEST (p. 80), he is partly right for largely wrong reasons. He espouses the usual cliches common to so many Billy the Kid buffs that "Garrett killed the Kid for glory and prestige." Why else would he kill him? Certainly not for money! Mr. Book should remember that Garrett was the sheriff and that the Kid was a wanted fugitive, wanted for murder.

Somehow or other, Garrett has become a monster of sorts because he did not let Billy the Kid shoot **him** that night in Pete Maxwell's bedroom. The Kid had already killed half-a-dozen (not the fabled 21) men from ambush, or without giving any of them an opportunity for their lives, and somehow this has become romantic and fair over the decades.

In fairness to the Kid, he was intelligent, educated for his time, and a good leader. He was neither a homicidal maniac, a moronic killer, a bum, or simply a poor boy who never did anyone any wrong. He was no better and no worse than any of his contemporaries, but he was dramatic, he was dangerous, and he outlived many of the well-known Lincoln County personalities such as Dick Brewer, John Tunstall, Alexander McSween, Lawrence Murphy, and so forth.

To say that "Garrett was just a shade lower than Billy" is ridiculous. Does it mean in size? Garrett never murdered anyone, although some of his killings were controversial. Show me an instance where Garrett participated in a gang killing. Show me where Garrett was ever indicted for murder. People forget that Garrett once took the Kid prisoner and then risked his life to protect him and other prisoners from an enraged mob. You know, western history is full of instances where a lawman was "surprised" by vigilantes and the prisoners hanged or otherwise killed. (This happened to John Poe.) Such an occurrence would have been unthinkable during Garrett's tenure.

Garrett's death *is* controversial, and it will never be satisfactorily explained because the proof is lacking. Historians will argue over who committed this murder until the end of time. That Mr. Book never heard of Jim Miller's alleged involvement is astonishing, since every book ever written on the subject deals in some respect with this possibility. (See *Shotgun for Hire, How Pat Garrett Died, Tularosa, The Fabulous Frontier,* etc.) Book states that Miller denies on the day of his hanging that he shot Garrett, when actually he never said a word about the matter one way or the other because no one asked him.

I will agree with Mr. Book on one main point: In my judgment Wayne Brazel did Kill Pat Garrett. My research brought me to this conclusion long after I thought that a giant conspiracy had existed, that Jim Miller had done the shooting, Brazel had taken the blame, and W.W. Cox had paid for everything. In my opinion, none of this is so. Brazel killed Garrett because he feared and hated him. It is as simple as that.

I reached this conclusion by talking to Dona Ana County ranchers and historians (many of whom knew both Garrett and Brazel), by examining the death site, by interviewing a Garrett son and daughter who are still alive, examining some of their father's records, and finally by thoroughly going over documents in the Dona Ana County courthouse. In the courthouse were the greatest finds of all, untouched and unused by historians and writers. As mentioned, these records do not *prove* anything; but they give the unescapable conclusion, in my opinion, that Brazel committed the murder and was not paid to do so.

The University of Oklahoma will soon release my book entitled *Pat Garrett: The Story of A Western Lawman,* $8.95. I have tried to present all of my Garrett murder findings there.

Sincerely,
Leon C. Metz
5235 Rushing Drive,
El Paso, Texas 79924

Dear Sir,

I am a recent convert to REAL WEST and other literature concerning the west. I have here the names of a couple of men who were, in their days, known gunfighters. I know next to nothing of their lives or their gunfights. Since it is practically impossible for me to do so, could you, if possible, obtain the information? Louis L'amour is reputed to have information concerning 2,000 gunfighters. Even if I knew his address, I doubt if I could obtain his address from his publishers. I would like all that you can supply me with on: Ben K. Allison of San Saba, Texas; Jim Courtright, Fort Worth gunman; Cullen Baker (did he invent the first "fast draw"?); Mysterious Dave Mathers.

Concerning the RW issue dated May of 73, you have an article concerning the possible suicide of Gen. George Armstrong Custer at the Little Big Horn. When I was in high school, I read a book on the detailed battle by a noted author whose name I can't remember, who stated that Custer was the first man to die there. He was shot off his horse as he crossed the river. To me, this was again verified by the publication of a second book on that battle. This book is from the Indian side of that engagement. This book again verifies that Custer's body was discovered floating in the river. His body was not mutilated, nor as people like to think, was he the last man on that hill to die, armed with two revolvers and surrounded by Indians.

Sincerely yours,
JAMES R. COOPER III

U.S. Army Material Management Agency,
Eur. APO New York 09052

**All of the gunfighters named above have been the subject of articles that have appeared in REAL WEST.**

Dear Sirs,

For the past 15 years I have been buying Western Magazines of all kinds, and REAL WEST has been my favorite for many of these years.

However ... lately, you have been slipping ... may I tell you why?

There are many, many outlaws and lawmen alike to write about; there are hundreds of stories still untouched. Yet you publish the same old stories about the same men over and over again. Right now I have over 500 magazines, every now and then I get them out and go through them; what do I find? The same photos! The same stories worded differently. It's getting to be a bore.

I am sure there are fresh writers with fresh ideas; how about giving them a chance? There are thousands of artists around that can draw up some fresh pictures of these gunfighters, but I see the same old ones over and over again. Sometimes I pick up a magazine at the book stand, thumb through it, and think I have read it before because of the same pictures, or topic ...

The One writer that I do appreciate, the one that to me DOES keep the game alive with his freshness is CARL W. BREIHAN. He is forever coming on with a new discovery. I do look forward to his articles.

I know of several writers that have written to magazines with GOOD stories. One of them spent several months searching out the truth, wrote a beautiful story, and the magazine shunned him. This is unfair, especially when, in the very next issue, a couple of stories were run with pictures we've seen a hundred times before.

Why don't you run a "writer of the month" or NEWCOMER OF THE MONTH, giving a

*(continued on page 60)*



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# REAL WEST

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The Brand of Quality

Volume XVII
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By Cy Martin

●

J. ROSS BROWNE, WESTERN CRUSADER
By Clarence Fink

●

SISTER FORTS OF MONTANA
By Louise Cheney

●

DAVE BARRY, THE LITTLE SHADOW CATCHER
By Earl V. Chapin

●

THE TROUBLE MAKING GUINEA FOWLS
By Maurice Kildare

●

THE WEST'S GREATEST SILVER RUSH
By Richard F. Taylor

●

HACKSAW TOM, THE RATTLESNAKE MAN
By Ethel Kimball

●

MYSTERIOUS DAVE MATHER
By Calico Jones

●

WASHOE CITY OF THE COMSTOCK LODE
By Doris Cerveri

●

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●

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*Due to circumstances beyond our control, "WASHOE CITY OF COMSTOCK LODE" scheduled for this issue will appear in a future issue.*

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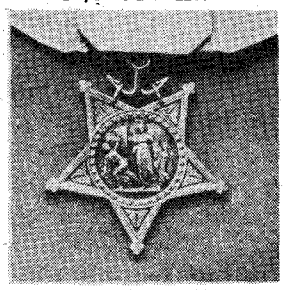

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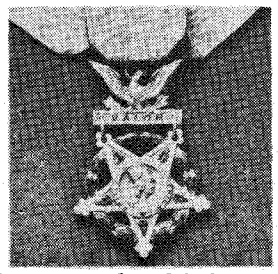
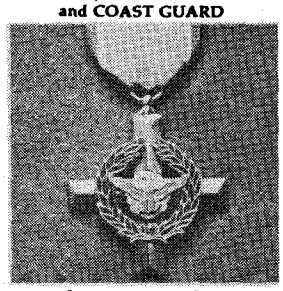
**The Navy Cross**
NAVY, MARINE CORPS and COAST GUARD

**The Silver Star**



**Congressional Medal of Honor**
ARMY



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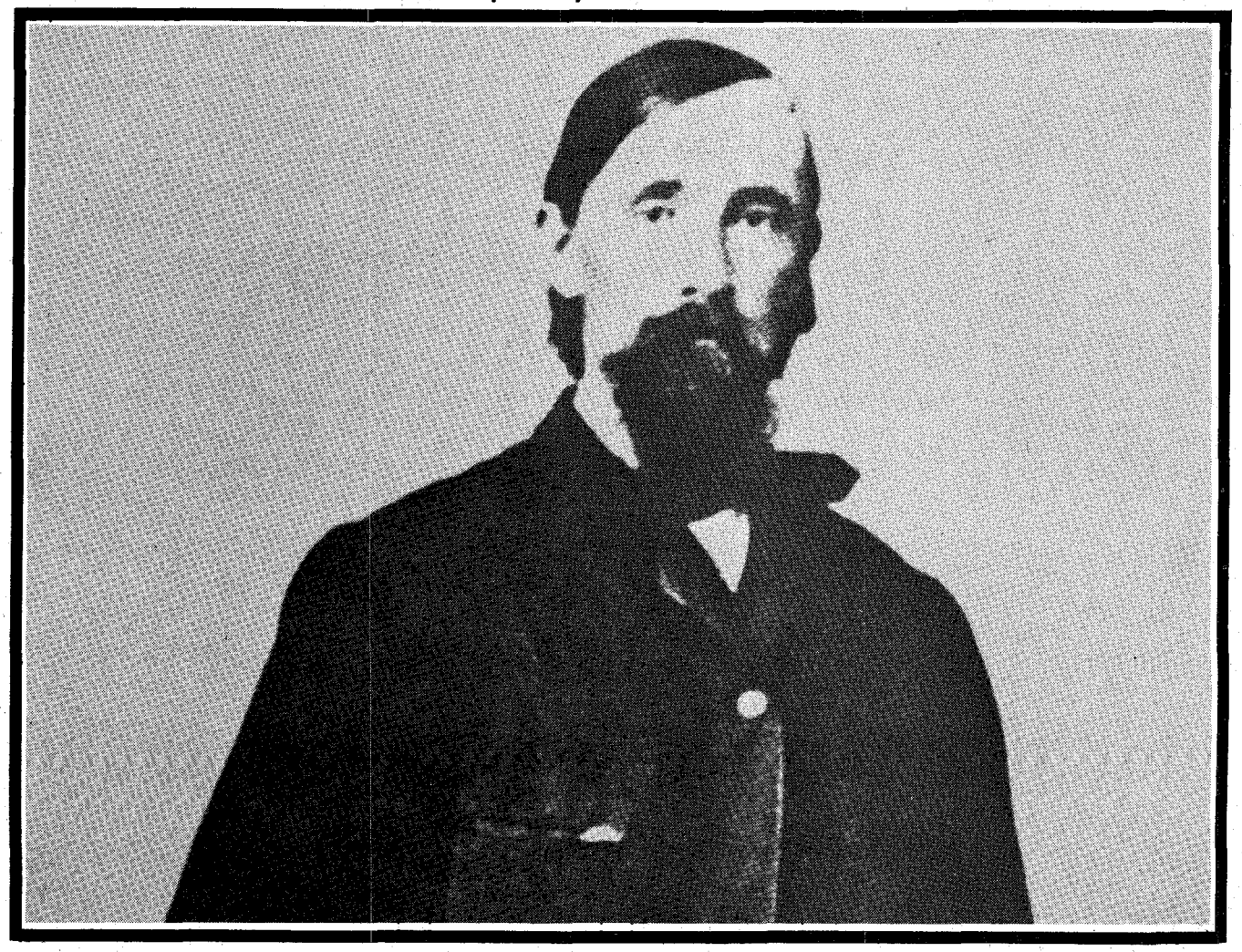
# THE DEFENSE

**New Ulm, in 1862, stood at the confluence of the Cottonwood and Minnesota Rivers. The Civil War had begun and recruiters were beating the drums for Union soldiers when they heard the beat of different drums, Sioux war drums! Chiefs Little Crow, Mankato, and Big Eagle led the Sioux. The attack failed but the whites, temporarily abandoned the Minnesota town.**



*Charles E. Flandréau, the hero of New Ulm.*

Monday, August 18, 1862, was a rather special day at New Ulm, a flourishing little village near the Sioux Reservation in southern Minnesota. The people were caught up in the ferver of the Civil War, and on that day the townspeople had thronged the streets to give a small group of recruiters a rousing send-off.

The recruiters were led by a brass band which played martial airs and a few good old German melodies until they were out of town on the dusty road leading west. Then the bandsmen joined the recruiters in the two wagons. The prairie was flooded with golden autumnal sunshine. The patriotic contingent sought to interest young farmers working in the harvest fields in joining the great struggle to abolish slavery and preserve the Union.

In 1862 New Ulm was a settlement of nine hundred persons. It had attained that respectable number for a frontier village through the efforts of two German colonization companies which had merged as the German Land Association of Minnesota. The town was named after the cathedral city of Ulm in Wurttemburg, Germany.

The citizens of New Ulm could not know what was happening around the country, except what was reported by refugees who came from the immediate rural area. They did not know that the uprising had been triggered on Sunday by four Indians who had murdered five settlers at Acton on a dare.

When the culprits arrived at their encampment on Rice Creek and told their story, their leaders knew the fat was in the fire. Two of those murdered were women. Now, cer-



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# OF NEW ULM

By Earl V. Chapin

tainly, the white man would take vengeance. The annuity payments would be stopped. All night, couriers hurried to the various encampments, bearing the news. After midnight the chiefs began to gather at the House of Little Crow, the most influential among the chiefs. By dawn, Little Crow had given his assent to lead an uprising, beating the soldiers to the punch.

On Monday morning the Sioux attacked the Lower Agency, killing thirteen while seven lost their lives in flight. Word was spread not only by fleeing whites but by friendly Indians, and soon a large part of the populace of the lower Minnesota valley was streaming toward points of refuge like Fort Ridgely, New Ulm and Hutchinson.

The leading chiefs were counting upon surprise and the fact that many of the young white men were away to the Civil War to give them a decisive advantage in the perilous struggle fomented not really by a single incident, but by a long history of grievances that had been endured by the red man. The chiefs knew that two things must be accomplished quickly. Fort Ridgely, the one military bastion in the valley, must be taken and the principal village, New Ulm, destroyed.

The site, at the confluence of the Cottonwood and Minnesota Rivers, was well chosen. It stood on ground that occupied three terraces which rose from the rivers. The lower terrace was designated for commerce and shipping; the second was the business district; the third was residential.

The recruiters soon trundled into Milford township which was, at the moment, in the process of attaining a dubious distinction of which the recruiting party was soon to be a part. Milford township was making history by having the highest death rate of any township in the state. It had been stricken by a plague, not of typhoid nor of diphtheria, but of Indians.

The day before, the Sioux of the Upper and Lower Reservations along the Minnesota River had joined in an attack against the whites in a slaughter to be known as the Sioux Uprising. Before nightfall, fifty settlers in Milford township were to die by gun, knife and war club. The recruiting party was ambushed at the bridge crossing a ravine five miles from New Ulm and were lucky to escape with only four dead. The party's pell mell return was the first knowledge the citizens of New Ulm had of the deadly peril surrounding them. Any uncertainty of the scope of the Indian trouble was banished as refugees began to pour into town.

The site of New Ulm offered its citizens one advantage against attack. Because of the rivers, they were not likely to be attacked from the northeast or south because the Indians could be shot down as they were fording the streams. The Minnesota was a substantial river. The attack, which was expected momentarily, would probably come from the west.

The momentary panic which struck the village, as the news of the Sioux Uprising raced from lip to lip, was lessened by the resolute action of Charles Roos, Brown County Sheriff, and Jacob Nix, a man with military experience. They organized the men into fighting units and distributed some forty guns among them. Most of the firearms were fowling pieces, antiques brought from the old country. Those who had no guns at all were given pitchforks, scythes and other makeshift weapons and set to work building barricades.

*A scene from the Gag-Heller-Schwendinger panorama. Figure in central foreground is William Dodd being shot off his horse by the Sioux.*



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Chiefs Little Crow, Mankato and Big Eagle wanted to attack Fort Ridgely without delay. They were overruled by the impetous young men who saw in New Ulm an opportunity to loot well-stocked stores and carry off women. This action was a major blunder which seriously affected the Indians' cause. The impromptu attack which followed allowed time for troops to reinforce Fort Ridgely and divided the Indians numerically in their initial assault on New Ulm.

While men were erecting barricades on the outskirts of New Ulm that tumultuous Monday, the women were sent to the Dakota House, the town's leading hotel, and to other nearby buildings. They were packed in so tight at the Dakota House that a witness afterwards reported that the women had to take their hoopskirts off and pile them in the back yard.

By this time, refugees were streaming into the village with tales of terror. Sheriff Roos acted wisely and efficiently. He sent messengers to seek reinforcements from St. Peter and the nearby settlements. Small parties were dispatched to bring in farmers who might either be unaware of their danger, or holed up to defend their log cabins.

As he was nominally in charge, it may be assumed that it was Sheriff Roos who instructed the courier to St. Peter to continue on to Traverse des Sioux and summon Charles E. Flandreau to the coming defense of New Ulm. The courier, Henry Behnke, clattered up to Flandreau's home on a lathered mount at 4 a. m. Tuesday morning.

Flandreau was a man to meet any emergency, a unique figure of the Minnesota frontier. He had come to Minnesota while it was still a territory in 1853 at the age of twenty-five.

Flandreau was admitted to the bar, founded the village of St. Peter, and from nearby Traverse des Sioux maintained a law practice on the frontier by traveling on horseback, by canoe and afoot. He won an awesome reputation as a trial lawyer and was well known in New Ulm by qualifying many German immigrants for preemption.

Appointed Indian agent for the Upper and Lower Sioux in 1856, Flandreau distinguished himself for sound advice and forthright opinions. Of soldiers pursuing the renegade Inkpaduta, he said that "the poor troops were about as fit for their (winter) march as an elephant in a ballroom." As to fighting Indians, he recommended armed cavalry, saying that to employ infantry was a waste of time.

He understood the plight of the Indians forced into treaty. He said "They were given lands they did not want and were nearly destitute of game," and that "delayed annuities caused much suffering."

Flandreau had served as associate justice of the territorial supreme court on the constitutional convention, and withal he had become an established leader. By 9 p.m. of the day he was summoned, Flandreau was in New Ulm at the head of a contingent of some one hundred and twenty-five frontier fighters from St. Peter and LeSueur.

In the meantime, much had happened in a beleaguered city. After a night of fitful sleep for all, Sheriff Roos and Jacob Nix continued to send couriers into the countryside for help. They ran great risks, and one rescue mission came to grief. The party was ambushed and eleven men were killed.

The young braves, hot for plunder and scalps and about a hundred in number, appeared on the heights above New Ulm at about three o'clock Tuesday. They began sharpshooting with superior fire power. The answering German fire fell short until the attackers drew near. Some outlying houses were set afire by the Indians, but several of the defenders rushed over the barricade and into an abandoned house, and drove back the initial Sioux sally.

A thunderstorm rose over the hot prairie and dumped a deluge of rain down on the warriors, which seemed in some measure to dampen their

*Sioux attacking outskirts of New Ulm. From a painting in the Brown County Historical Museum.*



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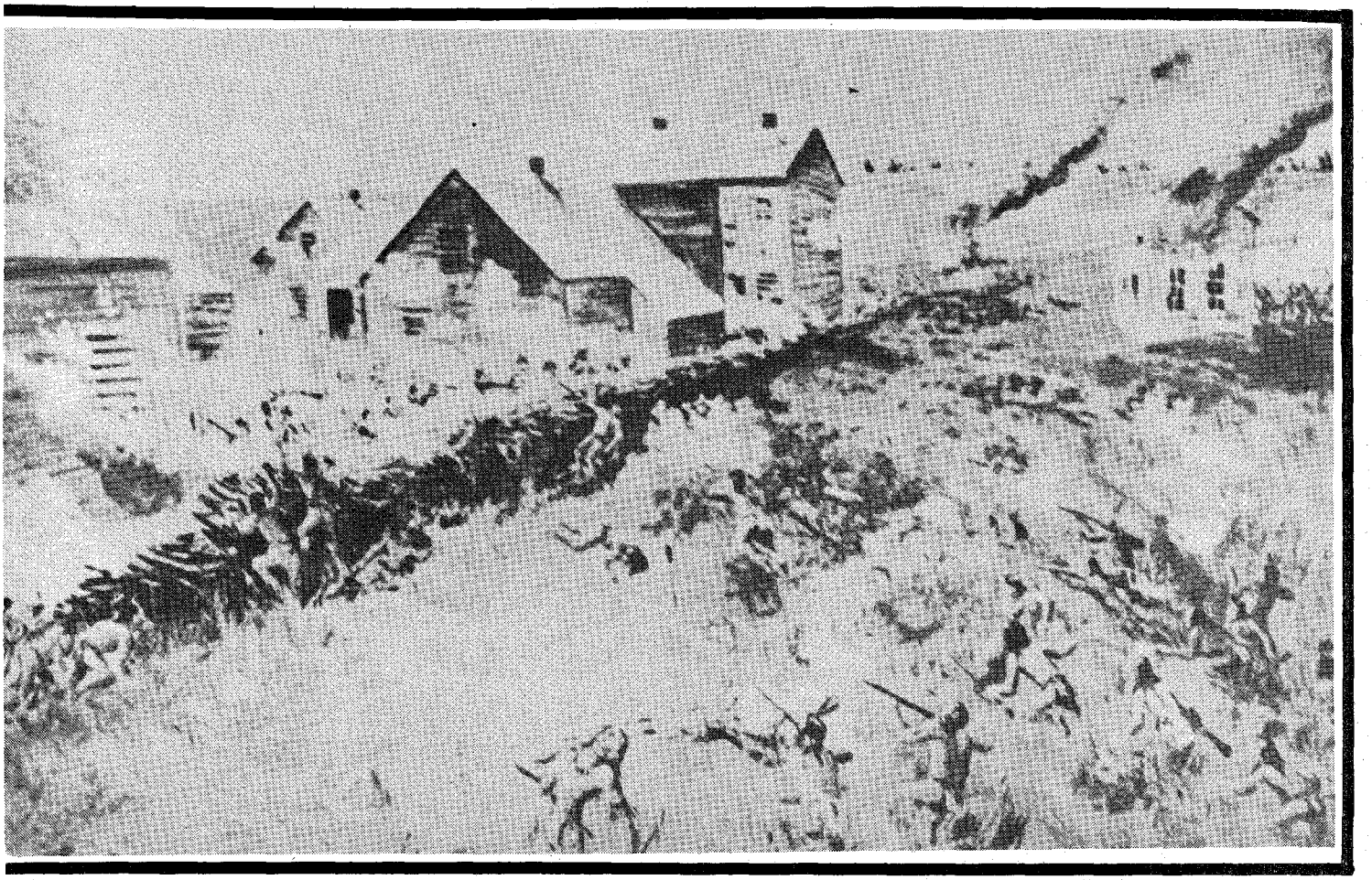

*This painting by Gag shows the Sioux assaulting the barricades while they burn houses on the perimeter.*

spirits. But the real reason for the failure of this initial assault seems to have been part of the fatal flaw of divided command. The chiefs were busy rallying their braves for an attack on Fort Ridgely. There was no one at New Ulm that day to lead this self-willed rump secession. Nevertheless, six whites at New Ulm were killed, and at least five wounded in the skirmish.

New Ulm subsequently received a much-needed respite as the Sioux attacked Fort Ridgely on Wednesday and Friday.

Upon his arrival, Flandreau was named commander of the defense forces by common consent, and given the honorary title of colonel. He named William B. Dodd as his second in command. The barricades were improved and some military maneuvers were practiced.

The defenders were joined by a hundred men from Mankato as well as contingents from Le Sueur and Nicollet and Brown counties. On Saturday morning, rebuffed at Fort Ridgely, but toughened by experience and some 650 strong, the Indians moved toward New Ulm. At best, the defense forces numbered no more than 300 guns, and before the battle began, this number was reduced by seventy-five.

Columns of smoke towering up into the bright blue August sky told of the approach of the Sioux army, burning houses and haystacks along the way. Flandreau sent a detachment of seventy-five men under Lt. William Huey of Traverse des Sioux across the river to scout and presumably oppose the Indian advance. The move was a mistake, though historians treat it both lightly and sparingly. Huey was cut off and retreated toward St. Peter. The force was thus recuced to 225 guns when the Sioux cavalry, having crossed the river above New Ulm, appeared on the prairie west of the beleaguered village.

States the *History of the Sioux Indians*"(Flandreau's) volunteers were armed generally with shotguns but among them were thirty or forty squirrel rifles. Down came the Indians, in the bright sunlight, galloping, running, yelling and gesticulating in the most fiendish manner. The short-range shotguns could not check them until their rifle fire began to tell upon the lines. They deployed to right and left until they covered the entire front, then charged." Chief Mankato led the attack: his plan was to envelop the town.

Flandreau later wrote that the Indians' advance was "a very fine spectacle and to such inexperienced soldiers as we all were, intensely exciting." The awesome sight, as the Indians fanned out, unsettled the defenders who had been stationed out on the open prairie. They broke for the rear, and for a moment the future of New Ulm, its women and children, hung in the balance.

The oncoming Indians occupied the buildings left undefended. Their magnificent charge was thus broken, and the whites soon mustered their wits and their courage. They held fast at the barricades and reoccupied some of the outlying houses.

The battle then turned into a sniper's contest. Some of the defenders' rifles must have been better than they thought, for some thirty of the Le Sueur Tigers, occupying a windmill, created by their sharpshooting. Others, from brick buildings which had been portholed, fired from the vantage of height and



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good protection.

The wind was blowing strong from the lower part of town, and accordingly the Sioux began to fire the buildings there, hoping to start a conflagration that would race through town. Capt. Dodd galloped off toward the threatened point and the Indians put five bullets into his body. He died about an hour later.

Flandreau wrote that "The fighting raged from house to house in the lower part of town and continued with varying success all the forenoon, during which time we lost in killed and wounded sixty men, ten killed and fifty wounded."

All this time, resolute fire from the barricades kept the Indians at bay, and luckily, burning debris carried by the wind did not ignite buildings in the inner core of the village. At length, the burned buildings worked against the Sioux: they left an open space which the Indians hesitated to cross.

But by mid-afternoon the Indians had gradually neared the defenses. "They were within two blocks of us and it looked very threatening," wrote Flandreau. At this time, two men of the Mankato company warned the commander, "Colonel, these Indians will bag us in about an hour and a half."

"What remedy do you propose?" inquired Flandreau.

They proposed making for the Cottonwood timber, but Flandreau, thinking of women and children being exposed in such a retreat, rejected the suggestion. His counter-proposal was to take forty or fifty picked men "and drive the enemy out of the lower town or die trying."

About the same time, it appears that the Sioux, likewise aware that a crucial moment was at hand, were planning their own strategy. Taking advantage of the smoke, about fifty or sixty warriors, mounted and on foot, prepared for a charge. At that same time, the picked defenders "howling like savages" rushed forward. The advancing Indians were closer than they thought. The defenders ran amongst them in a great melee. The Sioux were surprised and caught off balance. "They turned and ran and we followed them, firing when we could, until we drove them beyond the last house in the lower town," wrote Flandreau.

Again fortune was with the defenders. They reached a quantity of saw logs behind which they took refuge and continued their fire. Indian bullets made splinters fly among them.

The whites were now in command of the burning, outlying district, and Flandreau directed that the remaining buildings, about forty, be burned. Without this shelter for another advance, the Indians withdrew.

By now, night had fallen and the scene of carnage was made lurid by the flames. In all, one hundred ninety structures in New Ulm were ablaze or in smouldering ruins.

A strong guard was posted through the long night, and a line of rifle pits were dug and manned outside the barricades. Intermittent firing continued during the dark hours. On Sunday morning the Indians appeared on the skyline, fired some shots, and withdrew.

The defenders of New Ulm had reason to think that the attack had been abandoned, but they could not be sure. One thing was certain. Wrote historian William Watts Folwell, "For five days some 1,200 noncombatants had been cooped up in a small area within the barricades. The women and children had been huddled in cellars and closed rooms like sheep in a cattle car."

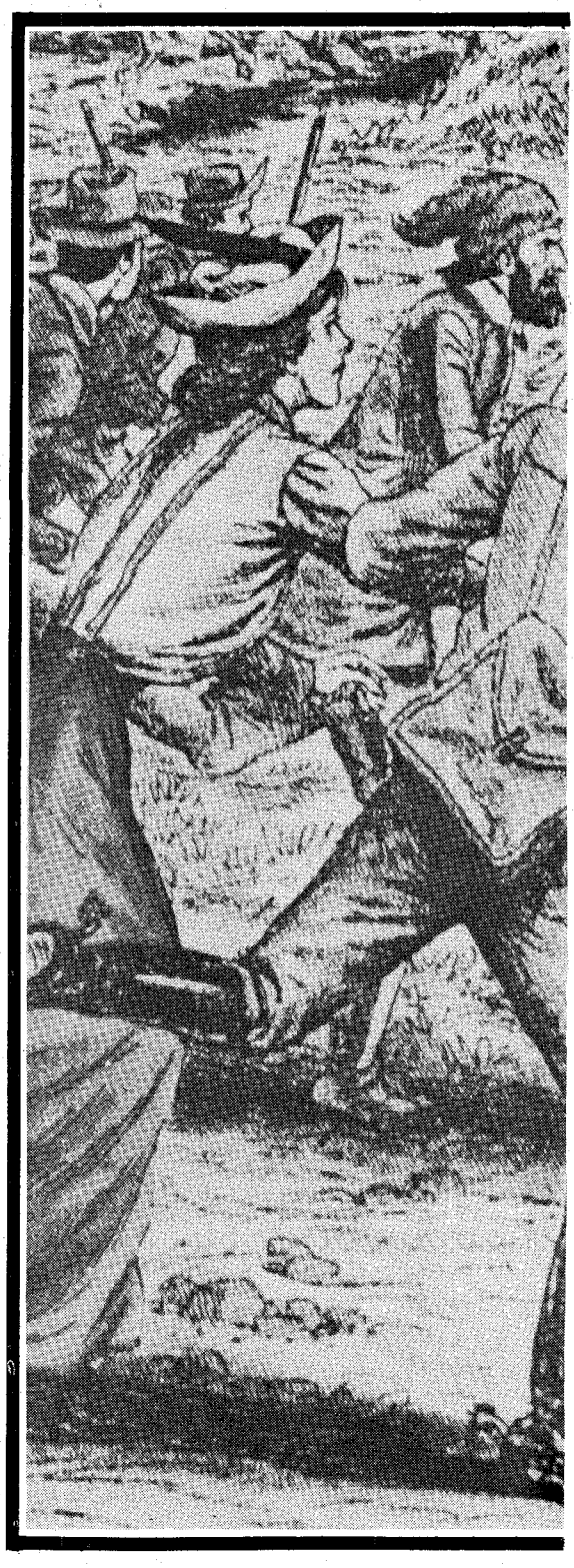
About noon Sunday, Capt. E. St. Julien Cox arrived in New Ulm with about a hundred volunteers sent by Gen. Henry H. Sibley, with them were members of Huey's command who had got themselves detached from the defense of the village when they crossed the Minnesota River.

There now appeared to be sufficient armed strength to attempt an evacuation of New Ulm. This decision was made by a council of officers on Sunday afternoon. The choice was a perilous one, but on the other hand, there was the danger of pestilence, food shortage and a short supply of ammunition.

The evacuation was carried out the following morning. As an eventual return of the Indians was expected, the merchants opened their stores to the people. Rudolph Leonhart, a school teacher, wrote that, "The streets soon resembled a county fair, almost as if a whirlwind had raced through and left all in the wildest disorder. Here lay half-opened packages of knives and forks ... an upturned coffee grinder ... combs, brushes, shoe polish."

Officials in charge of loading made short work of this plunder. "The stoves flew from the wagons, the barrels and chicken coops also." No unnecessary impedimenta was allowed on this perilous trek.

At 10 a. m. the signal to start was sounded. The refugees and their personal possessions were loaded into



153 vehicles, and they headed for Mankato, some thirty miles away.

Wrote Flandreau, "A more heart-rending procession was never witnessed in America. It was a melancholy spectacle to see two thousand people, who a few days before had been prosperous and happy, reduced to utter beggary, starting on a journey ... through a hostile country, every inch of which we expected to be called upon to defend from attack."

Mankato lay to the east and in the



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*Illustration from a dime novel (Pluck and Luck No. 60, July, 1899) which tells the story of the Sioux uprising.*

direction of the reservation of the Winnebago Indians who, it was feared, might be hostile. This choice was made over St. Peter to avoid ferrying the Minnesota River with its dangers of lost time and ambush.

The refugees reached Mankato safely that night.

In the defense of New Ulm, thirty-four lost their lives and sixty were wounded. No accurate estimate was ever made of Sioux casualties.

But after Saturday's battle, the Sioux acknowledged their repulse at New Ulm, and with their plunder and captives won through harrying the countryside, they began a retreat up the west side of the Minnesota River.

●**RW**

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COVER STORY

# The Montana Wolf That COULDN'T BE KILLED

By Ernest H. Hart

He drifted like a feral ghost across the light snow that had fallen the day before, covering the Belt Mountain range of Montana with a coating of shallow white. He was big, this lobo, bigger than Buffalo Wolves ever get. But his movements were light and graceful, and tremendous muscle-masses rippled the pale gray, heavy pelt, a coat that blended with the snow to make him all but invisible; only the lolling red tongue in the powerful jaws would catch the eye.

He was in his prime, killing machine, designed by nature to bring down game with an astounding economy of effort. But this lobo had a taste for prime Montana beef, and it was beef that he hunted and killed to give him sustenance, to feed his huge, muscle-packed frame so that he could hunt and kill again. This was the law, the way nature intended it should be: the carnivores, the meat eaters, must prey upon the herbivorous animals and so sustain a balance among living creatures.

Of course the lobo didn't know this. He knew only that he must hunt so that he could eat when he grew hungry. Deep within him instinct warned that if he didn't eat he would die. And so he hunted and he ate ... he ate beef from the herds of the Montana cattlemen, for it was the food he favored. It was this fastidious appetite which was to make him the most famous and furiously hunted lobo the west has ever known.

Suddenly the great wolf's ground-covering lope came to a quick halt. He stood motionless, only his black nose moving, taking scent from the air. A low growl escaped him, for he scented metal and man smell, the odor of smoke and sweat. A baited trap, and inside him rage grew and he remembered back to a time when he was young. He had been hunting with the pack then and being youthful, eager, and even then long-limbed and stronger than the rest, he had forged ahead and was first to see the bawling calf. Instinct the scent of man, the warning of the pack's grizzled leaders, all had come too late. He had whipped aside, but the steel jaws of the hidden trap had snapped shut, catching one big paw, clamping around the arched toes.

He had yelped once and then been silent, standing there with the pain of the metal teeth tearing through his toes. The pack had ringed him quietly, yellow eyes watching. Now he, too, was prey. This was the pack-law of blood and fang. Silently they closed in, then one lean, gray shape launched itself at the trapped wolf. The big wolf pivoted, paying no heed to the heavy trap, and slashed out, his teeth tearing through hair and muscle. The attacker howled and limped away.

Three times they tried, and three times the big, snarling youngster sent them sprawling and bloody into the dirt. Then, at a signal from the old leader the cannibalistic pack had turned and, like smoke wraiths, faded away into the pines. The trapped wolf studied his bleeding foot and slowly moved it, eventually releasing all but one toe into which the sharp, metal teeth of the trap had sunken deeply.

He knew there was but one way to free himself, and he lay down and with small moans gnawed on the bloody toe until he had severed it. Then he limped away dragging his maimed foot and found a cave and stayed there. Through waves of pain and fever he heard the rain come that night, rain that washed away his blood sign, his trail to the cave. Almost two weeks later he emerged from the cave, gaunt, a skeleton held together by tendons and hair. But his foot was almost healed, and he could hunt again.

During those pain-laden days and nights in the cave he had reached maturity, and when he emerged, he was as cunning, as wise as the old leaders. He never hunted or had anything to do with a pack again. He was a loner, a lobo, depending only on himself for survival. For a week or two after this incident he sought easy prey until his foot was completely healed, and it was during this time that he acquired his taste for beef; first veal, young calves, then, when his foot was completely well, the prime cattle, fully grown steers and cows that weighed as much as 1,200 pounds.

Now, remembering all this, he turned aside and made a wide circle around the trap he knew was there, and moving at a ground-eating trot he headed for the Bear Paws, disappearing in minutes.

An hour passed. Two figures came toward the baited trap, taking shape as they came nearer. They were Assinniboine Indians, on foot, guns swinging in brown hands, packs on their backs, trappers walking their trap lines. Suddenly one halted and pointed to the ground.

They hunkered down, studying the tracks of the lobo, their breath making frost-smoke in the cold air as they spoke. Then one broke away from the line while the other continued. Two hours later, the Indian appeared at the door of the big ranch in the valley and told the rancher of the track he had seen in the snow.



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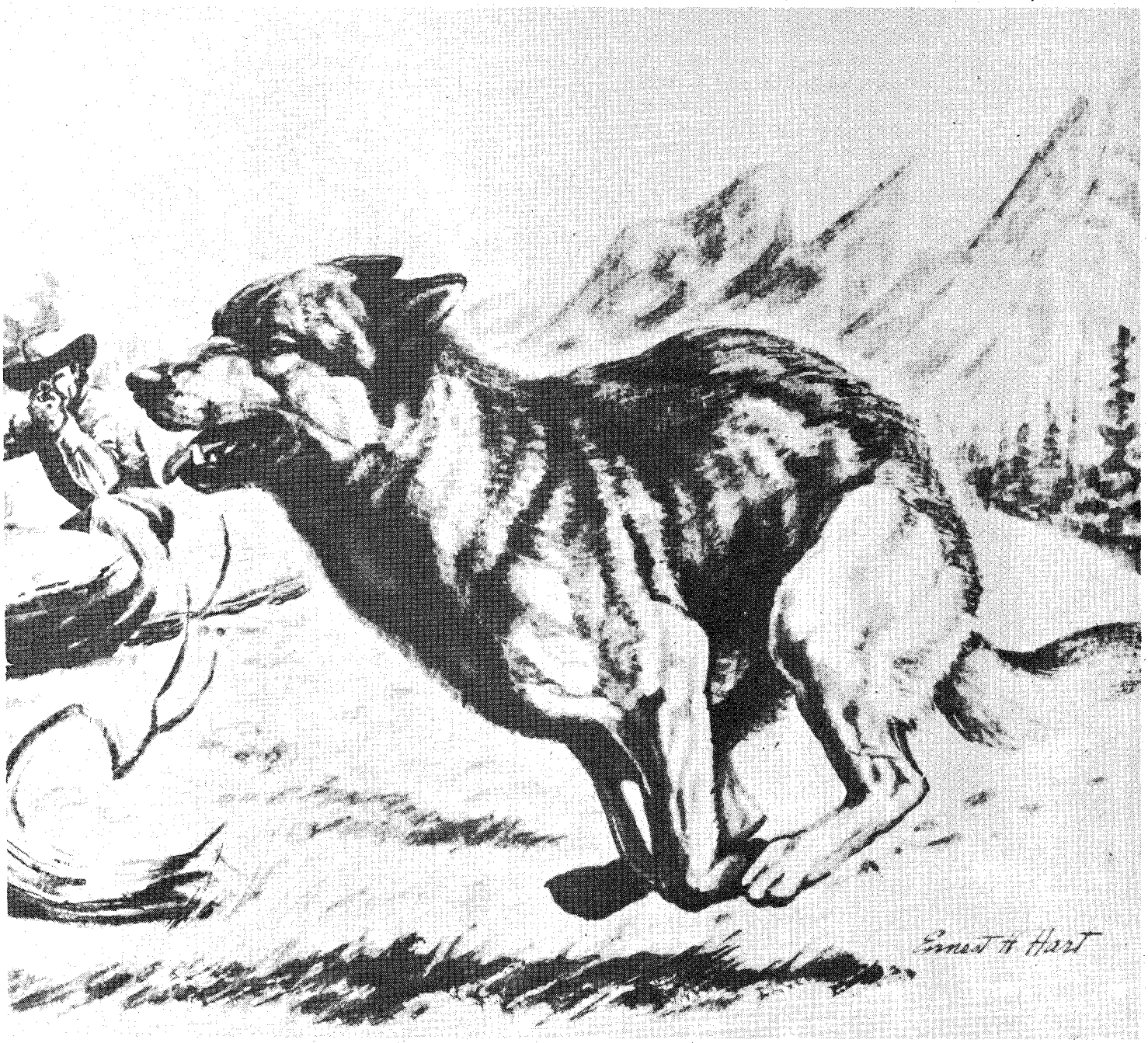
Sketched by the author




*The greatest hunters, trappers and sportsmen in this country and Canada tried to trap or kill the huge lobo and get the reward the cattle association offered for his scalp. But his lightning quickness, his speed afoot, made it seem as though he led a charmed life and no bullet could touch him. During his lifetime he hunted and killed over $80,000 worth of prime beef.*

Listening, excitement crossed the rancher's weather-beaten face, and he let out a rebel warwhoop that brought the men tumbling out of the bunk house. "Mount up, boys. Maybe we got a break. Two Feathers here says he saw the tracks of the lobo, Snowdrift, up on the heights. No mistake, he says they was bigger'n two wolves and had the toe missin' on the left front forefoot. C'mon, let's git us that damned lobo."

They went away in a bunch, the horses steaming and grunting. They found the tracks and rode hard, but they never caught sight of the giant lobo. They straggled back to the ranch with the dawn, cussing the night's sleep they had lost and the wolf that had made them lose it.

"Did the same thing six months back when he crossed our range," the fireman growled. "High-tailed it after him an' didn't catch a whiff. Maybe we oughtta fix a pit trap on that trail ..."

"Do no good," the rancher sighed wearily. " No trap's gonna catch that there he-wolf. An' he never crosses the same track twice. Heard tell he can travel a good hundred twenty-five miles in twenty-four hours."



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While the ranch hands rolled wearily in their blankets to snatch what sleep they could before the ringing of the breakfast triangle, many miles away the big loner, Snowdrift, silently stalked a bunch of cattle huddled in the lee of a rock outcropping. Suddenly he sprang forward, and as the cattle snuffled and bellowed he struck, his teeth slashing through the tough Achilles tendon of a big steer. The animal went down, his hind leg crippled, hamstrung, and a second later he died, choking on his own blood as the great canine teeth of the lobo severed his jugular with a slash as clean as a surgeon's scalpel.

The big wolf ate his full of fat-encrusted intestines filled with half digested greens; he sought and ate the liver and other internal organs before gnawing off the fibrous muscle meat. He cracked a thigh bone and sucked out the succulent marrow, then he looked up at the vultures beginning their circling in the sky above. It would mark the spot where he had made his kill, so he must move on.

He trotted toward the timber that bordered a stream and drank his fill, then he continued on, and when he had put enough distance between himself and the steer's carcass, he holed up in a cave and slept while his body absorbed strength from the food. He would not go back to his kill to feast again as other wolves did. He knew the danger of returning, so he ate only freshly killed meat, beef he had killed himself. When he awakened he would be gaunt again, his muscles absorbing the food but no fat forming on his big body, fat that would slow him down and dull the alertness that kept him alive.

He knew that he was constantly being hunted by the ranchers whose stock he preyed upon, and he was aware that during most of the year his very light coloring made the odds against him greater. Only in the few months of winter, when snow covered the Montana mountains and plains, was his bleached pelt an asset. During the summer, spring and fall he stood out against the deep colors of the landscape. But the danger only heightened his intelligence and gave impetus to his will to survive. In daring and courage this great lobo, Snowdrift, ranked above any other predator in the annals and lore of western history.

He ranged on a 75-mile front between the Bear Paws and the Belt Mountains of Montana, through the Highwood Mountains and across the Missouri River. And he could, in truth, travel 125 miles in a day.

The winter was severe that year, and while other predators grew gaunt with starvation, Snowdrift ate well from the cattlement's herds. He moved toward the Missouri, found it frozen and picked his way across the ice to the other side. But he didn't stay there long. There were forts and people there. He preferred the lonely cattle country of the mountains. Besides, it was the breeding season and the big lobo sought a mate. He found a bitch wolf with a pack and singled her out, drove away several rutting males who had wanted her for their own and were about to fight for the privilege of becoming her mate.

They left, beaten and licking their wounds while the bitch wolf followed Snow-drift toward the sierras. There they mated and the she-wolf made her nest in a shallow cave. But, unlike other wolves who stayed to protect and feed their mate and pups, the big lobo left as soon as the mating urge faded. He was a loner and nothing could make him change, and this in itself was very strange, for the canine race, since time began, have been pack animals.

The big cats travel and hunt singly, but the wolves and all other wild canines are born with the heritage to hunt and live in packs. Snowdrift was a mutation, a fact evidenced by his size, greater cunning, and intelligence. In him genetic heritage had changed or mutated, making him more adaptable to his environment and therefore better able to survive.

Spring came early to Montana that year, and the melting snow revealed piles of bones throughout the entire high Montana range that were the tokens of the lobo's appetite. Cowboys, riding the range for mavericks and taking a rough count, reported to their foremen that the wolves had taken a good cut of beef that year. And at the spring meeting of the Montana Cattlemen's Association at Fort Benton it became the main topic of conversation and no little anger. Each rancher reported that he had lost too much beef to the roaming wolf packs.

"Wolf packs. nothin'! It's that danged lobo, Snowdrift. We saw his tracks," one irate cattleman roared. "Charlie's right. We came across that loner's tracks, too. I can't take another year's losses like this. That damn wolf eats up my margin of profit," another rancher bitterly reported. "He chaws nothin' but prime beef, too."

Noise broke out as the excited ranchers cussed the big lobo, and the chairman of the meeting hammered on the desk with the handle of his revolver. "All right, gentlemen, let's have order. Now if this big wolf is all you claim him to be, I reckon he'll have to be hunted down an' killed an' that'll solve the problem."

"Cain't do that," a rancher called. "We got our chores to do. Cain't go bikin' off huntin' a damn ghost wolf we never get sight of. Ain't a soul in this room ever got in rifle range of that lobo I'll bet."

"I did, but he scooted so fast all I did was waste lead. Jed's right though. I think we had oughtta either hire hunters or offer a reward on Snowdrift. How you fellers feel?"

It was decided to offer a $500 reward to the man who could bring in the pelt of the big loner. Some of the cattlemen hired professional hunters besides, and posters were printed and sent out to surrounding states, Wyoming, the Dakotas, Idaho, and even Canada. Soon the best of the professional hunters and trappers began to drift into Montana. Quietly they studied the habits of Snowdrift, stalked him, set their traps, but he avoided them, often scraping and kicking up dirt on them to show his disdain.

Then the sportsmen came in with their hound packs to run him down. Big Blue Belton hounds, used as cat dogs, Redbones and Plott Hounds, filled the hills with their bays that echoed back from the high mountains. They found his scent, all right, but they never brought him to bay. He would wait until the hounds in their eagerness got far ahead of the huntsmen. Then he would turn and slash and leave them dying in their own bubbling blood.

Even greyhound, Scotch deerhound and Russian Wolfhound crosses, fast and deadly as lightning bolts, were sent after Snowdrift to run him down and kill him. But he outran them, outlasted them, when they came too close, he killed them.

During the next few years more than 200 other wolves were cleaned out of Montana territory by the hunters, until only the big lobo remained. But they couldn't catch or kill him, and he went on taking his pick of the herds and feasting on prime beef. Once he sighted hunters while he was feeding from a newly killed yearling cow, but they were at a great distance and he took his time in finishing his meal and then loping away. But the hunters carried new,



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Sketched by the author

*Snowdrift, the most remarkable wolf in the annals of western history. His cunning and intelligence became legend in Northern Montana.*

high-velocity arms, and though they were not really within range, a month of frustration hunting the big wolf pushed one of them into shooting angrily.

One of the bullets struck rock and ricocheted, entering the thigh of the huge wolf. His leg sagged, and the hunters shouted and ran toward him as he limped away. The hunt was up then, and even the ranchers took part. But the wily Snowdrift lost them and hid until he had bitten out the chunk of lead and the wound healed.

In the 1920's two noted hunters and trappers, Barney Brannon and Bob Kennon, took up the challenge of the great lobo. They used every trick known to man, even a wolf bitch in heat, but they had no luck, and for the first time in their lives they had to admit defeat.

The years rolled away and took their toll of the king of wolves. His back teeth fell out and he sought younger, more tender animals. He even had the audacity to enter barns and corrals to kill and carry away young calves. One thing he never did; he never killed just for the sake of killing as so many predators do. He killed for food and for no other reason. Though his cunning was even greater than it had been, he couldn't move as fast as in his prime, and his eyes and power of scent had been affected by age.

More years passed and the maimed paw print was still found beside the carcass of young cattle. For thirteen years the famous Snowdrift made fools of the greatest hunters, trappers and sportsmen in this country and Canada, but now his time was almost up. One day a rancher saw him, pulled his winchester from its saddle scabbard and drew a bead on the huge lobo. Snowdrift turned toward the man and drew himself up as though inviting the bullet that would end his life, a life that with advancing age had now become a burden. The rifle cracked. Lead ripped through the 200 feet between man and animal, and with a tired sigh the great wolf sank to the ground into the sleep that never ends.

At his death the lobo measured six feet in length and he was, by this time, almost pure white. It is roughly estimated that he had killed 1,600 head of cattle during his long reign as king of the Montana range.

The ranchers who had put up the money for his reward had him mounted. And so it ended as all things must end. But they know in Montana that no hunter or trapper outwitted him, no traps or poison caught or killed him, no man or animal could ever have brought him down. It was time ... time and age that struck him down.

The great wolf is dead, but the legend remains and always will, the legend of the Montana wolf that couldn't be killed, of Snowdrift, the great lobo, who never knew defeat. ●RW



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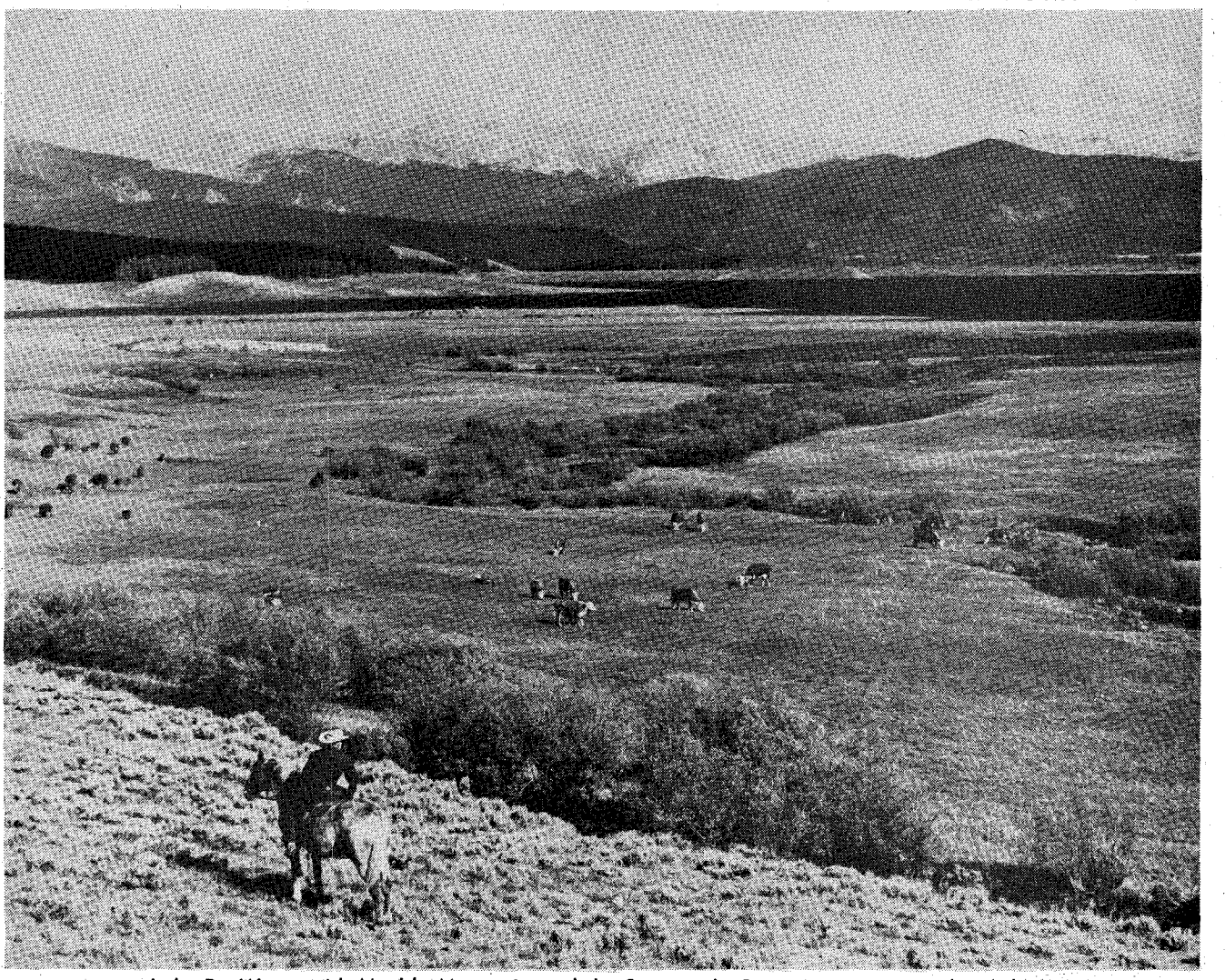
# The Golden Treasure of the SANGRE DE CRISTOS

By Cy Martin

**In Colorado, the legend of *La Caverna del Oro*, or, the Cave of Gold, flourishes. It seems the Spaniards worked a fabulously rich, underground gold mine, using Indian slave labor until the Indians tired of it and killed their masters. Some students of treasure lore place the cave near the great Crestone Needles, about 12 miles from Westcliffe, Colorado.**



Colorado Department of Public Relations

*Lake De Wesse with Marble Mountain and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on the skyline.*

According to ancient legend, the Spanish worked a fabulously rich, underground gold mine somewhere in the mountains they named *Sangre De Cristo* (Blood of Christ). They enslaved the Indians for all the heavy and dangerous work, with the activities going quite well for many years. The Spanish were able to store much bullion, but after a period of time, the Indians had had enough. They turned on their Spanish captors and killed many of them. A few others escaped through an underground passage, burying or spilling the bullion all along the way. From this tale comes the legend of *La Caverna del Oro.*

Almost every section of Colorado with a spare cave or hole in the ground lays claim to this fabulous treasure, dating back to the days of the conquistadors; now the discoveries of the past fifty years have led most experts to believe the famous cave is deep in the Sangre de Cristos in the area encompassed by T. 43-44 N. — R. 73 W., Sixth Principal Meridian (See footnote at end of article).

In fact, these students of lost treasure are positive the legendary cave is in the Marble cave (Spanish cave) area near the mighty Crestone Needles, only about 12 or 13 miles from Westcliffe, Colorado. The legend of the Spanish cave of gold is one of the earliest and one of the



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greatest of all legends of lost treasure in the West. These early Spaniards explored and named the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in their travels north from Santa Fe up the Rio Grande del Norte into Colorado, back in the late 17th century.

Men have been exploring these caves off and on for years; still, in the case of the Spanish Cave of Gold the most exciting finds were made as recently as 1960. These discoveries and others have led followers to believe that the study has only just begun. Back in 1869, Captain Elijah P. Horn, one of the first settlers in the West Mountain Valley, discovered a faded Maltese Cross over a cave entrance high on Marble Mountain.

The cross was old when it was found by Horn, and it measured two feet square and was colored with some sort of red pigment. Exploring further, Horn soon found evidence of rude fortifications and many arrowheads. He felt that this testified to a struggle. Nearby, Horn found a skeleton clothed in Spanish armor with an arrow piercing its chest area.

From the time of Horn until the early part of the 20th century, the cave was explored in part many times, but nobody made a serious study of it until Forest Ranger Paul Gilbert. Gilbert heard of the cave in 1919 from an old Indian squaw who claimed at the time to be 105 years of age.

She said she heard stories when she was young of the Spanish taking gold from this cave. She said if one descended to a great depth, a set of oak doors would be found. Behind them was the source of the gold, which she called the Three Steps Mine.

Gilbert followed the woman's instructions and located a cave the next summer, reporting that the cavern was more of a volcanic fissure than a true cave. Near the cave mouth Gilbert found an old rusted shovel and a piece of almost rotten rope. Still, he was unable to interest anyone in further exploration until 1929 when a party from the Colorado Mountain Club and a Forest Ranger by the name of Truman undertook a scientific exploration of the cave with him.

With great care the party descended deep into the shaft without finding its bottom. At 70 feet down, on a small ledge they discovered the remains of a crude ladder judged to be at least 200 years old. At approximately 300 feet down, they found a hand forged hammer, which again the scientists believed to be of 17th century manufacture.

Two of the party made their way down the circular shaft to a depth of nearly 500 feet. At that level, according to Gilbert, the hole was little more than a cold and muddy shaft with dangerously loose rock in the walls. Back at the surface they found good evidence of an ancient log and stone fort, along with many arrowheads scattered about.

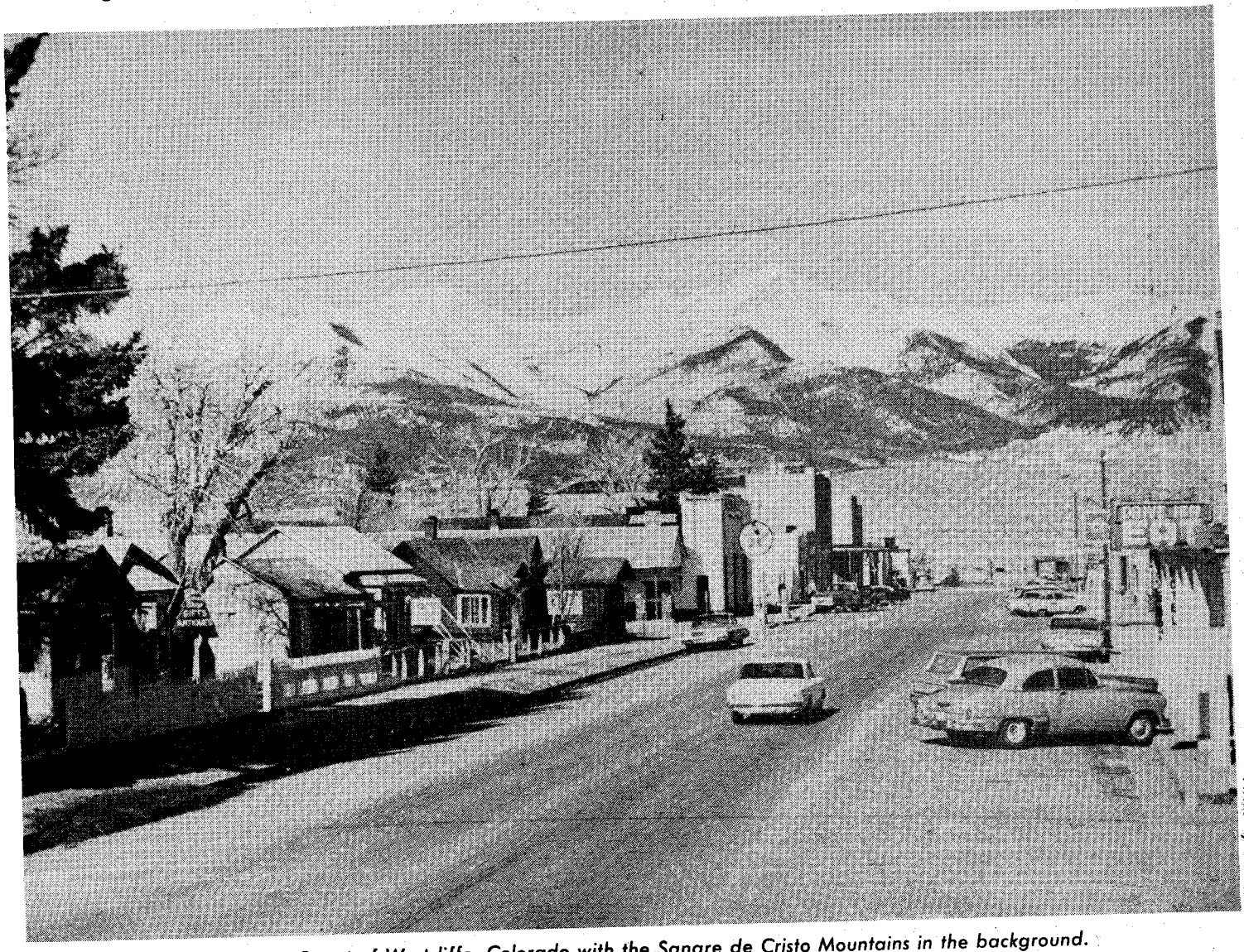

Photo by author

*Main Street of Westcliffe, Colorado with the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in the background.*



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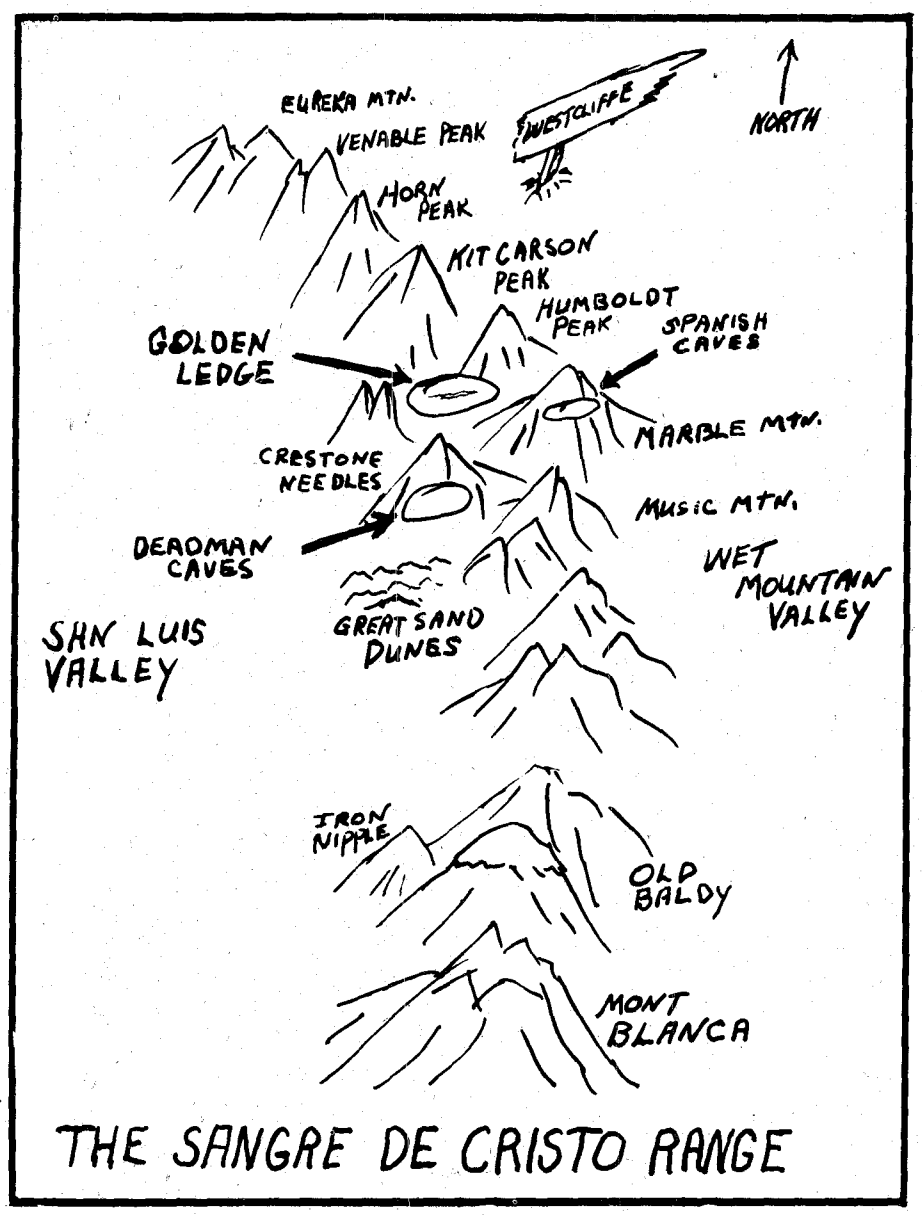



Sketched by the author

Sketch map of the Sangre de Cristo Range.

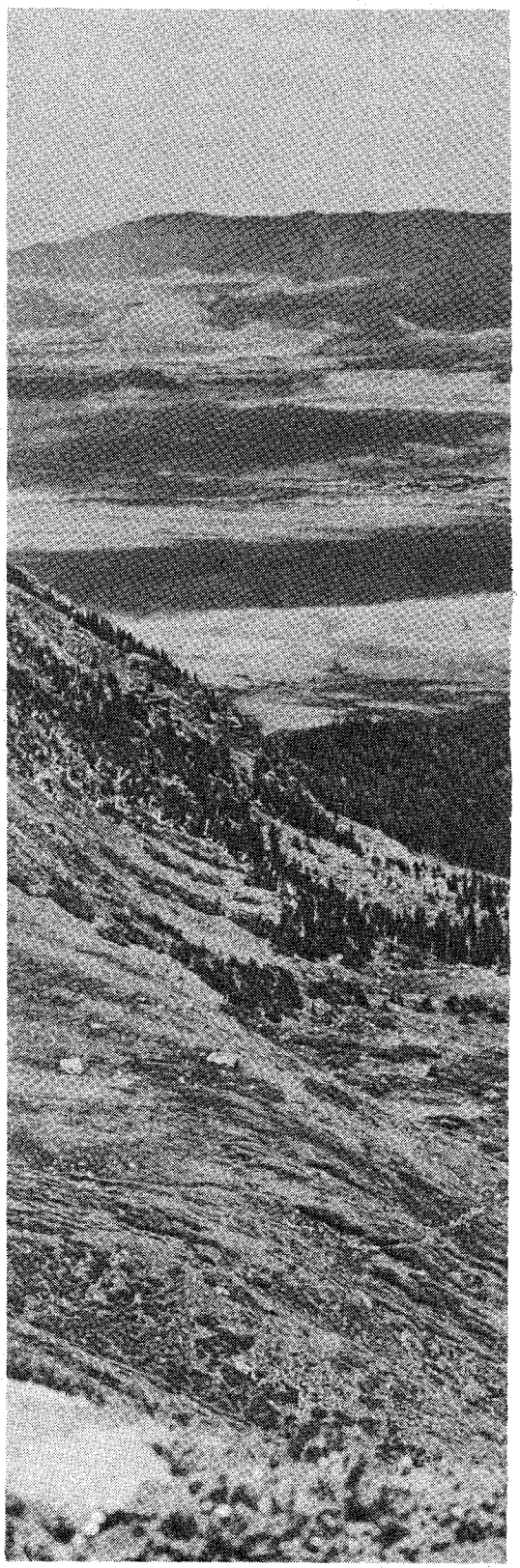
Later on, another exploration was headed by LeRoy Hafen, a historian of the Colorado State Historical Society. The party made a very detailed study of the cave, but went no further down than did the Gilbert party. They found good evidence of ancient occupation by man. Mrs. Hafen, who wrote up the journal of the expedition, said that the whole cavern had been eaten out from the limestone by trickling water working its way for centuries into the heart of the Sangre de Cristos.

In 1932 Peter Moser, Victor Donald and Jack Barth, of Denver, entered the cave with ropes. All three worked their way carefully down to the 100-foot level. From there, Moser lowered himself down another 250 feet and followed a passage for another 50 feet to still another level. At this level, Moser made a grizzly discovery, one that sent cold chills up his spine since he was alone in the black bowels of the Sangre de Cristos. There he found a human skeleton chained by the neck to one wall of the cave.

Within a year, Carl Blaurock, a scientist interested in geology, lowered himself over a hundred feet down into the cavern to study its geological make-up. Blaurock said it was a natural cave, water-carved, and probably lifted from its general location on the floor of an ancient sea to its present location by the upheaval which formed the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

He found much evidence to support such a speculation, because there were deposits of marble spreading across the mountainside not far from the cave entrance and over an area of many acres. The marble he found was almost solidly packed with fine fossilized forms of crinoids — those crazy mixed-up sea lilies which couldn't decide whether or not to be a plant or an animal — in the Cretaceous period.

Still, *La Caverna del Oro* was totally left in the dark until the Colorado Grotto of Spelunkers became interested in Marble Moun-



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tain. This particular Grotto contains some of the most expert cave scientists in the United States. They made several exploratory trips to the cave, and their early explorations seemed to debunk the legend and take away much of the romance of the cave.

They did reach the bottom - most level of the cave and found an ancient shovel embedded in the sand. As they worked their way down into the depths of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, they mapped and measured the cave, exploring every nook and cranny. Or so they thought!

They took samples of the rocks, sediments and took many pictures. Still, they didn't find the chained skeleton and they didn't find any precious metal.

But were they in the right cave, for there are several on Marble Mountain?

As it stood in the 1960's, the only actual evidence for the legend was a shovel, a couple of hand carved logs near the entrance, the Maltese Cross, plus the rude fort down the hill. These were the only solid items available to indicate early activity by the Spanish

*Comanche Lake in the Wet Mountain Valley and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in the background.*



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conquistadors.

In fact, the Colorado spelunkers were just about satisfied that they knew all there was to know about the cave. Then, in 1960 they made an exciting new discovery which showed that their work was far from finished. In the earlier explorations they had often passed by what they thought was a short pocket near the entrance. They were sure the pocket was nothing more than a short dead-end passage. They passed it off as such. That is, until during the summer of 1960 when the passage was tested.

It turned out to be the entrance to another section of the cave, easily as large as the first section they had explored for several years.

Time was running out; it was late fall and snow was falling. They couldn't explore the new section completely, but they found some very curious items. For example, this section of the cave was covered with animal bones which proved to have come from deer, elk, and mountain sheep — animals that had every right to be there.

But there were also some bones of buffalo and antelope. These bones had no right to be there at all unless their carcasses had been carried there by man or some other animal. The cave men found no evidence of any previous explorations in this new section. No one had been there since the Spaniards and Indians.

Another recent discovery makes one wonder if they were in the right cave at all, for there are 15 or more caves in the area of the so-called Spanish cave. The cave men figured they had them all worked out, that is, until they found the new wing of what they were calling Spanish Cave. Then, near the end of the short season, high on Marble Mountain the found a niche full of loose rock, a few hundred feet above the entrance of Spanish Cave.

No doubt many people had passed by many times and thought little about it, but one enterprising explorer decided to investigate. He and some friends cleared the rock away, and, sure enough, there was still another cave. Exploratory work on the new cave showed that no one had been in it in recent times. The new cave appeared to be the largest cave of all. It could even connect with others below and near it.

There is much to be done, and maybe the greatest discovery is yet to come. Maybe the cave found by Forest Ranger Paul Gilbert has yet to be found. After all, an avalanche or a rock slide could have buried it completely. Also, the cave found by Peter Mose, the one with the skeleton, could be temporarily lost as well. But then, this is part of the romance of spelunking for lost treasure.

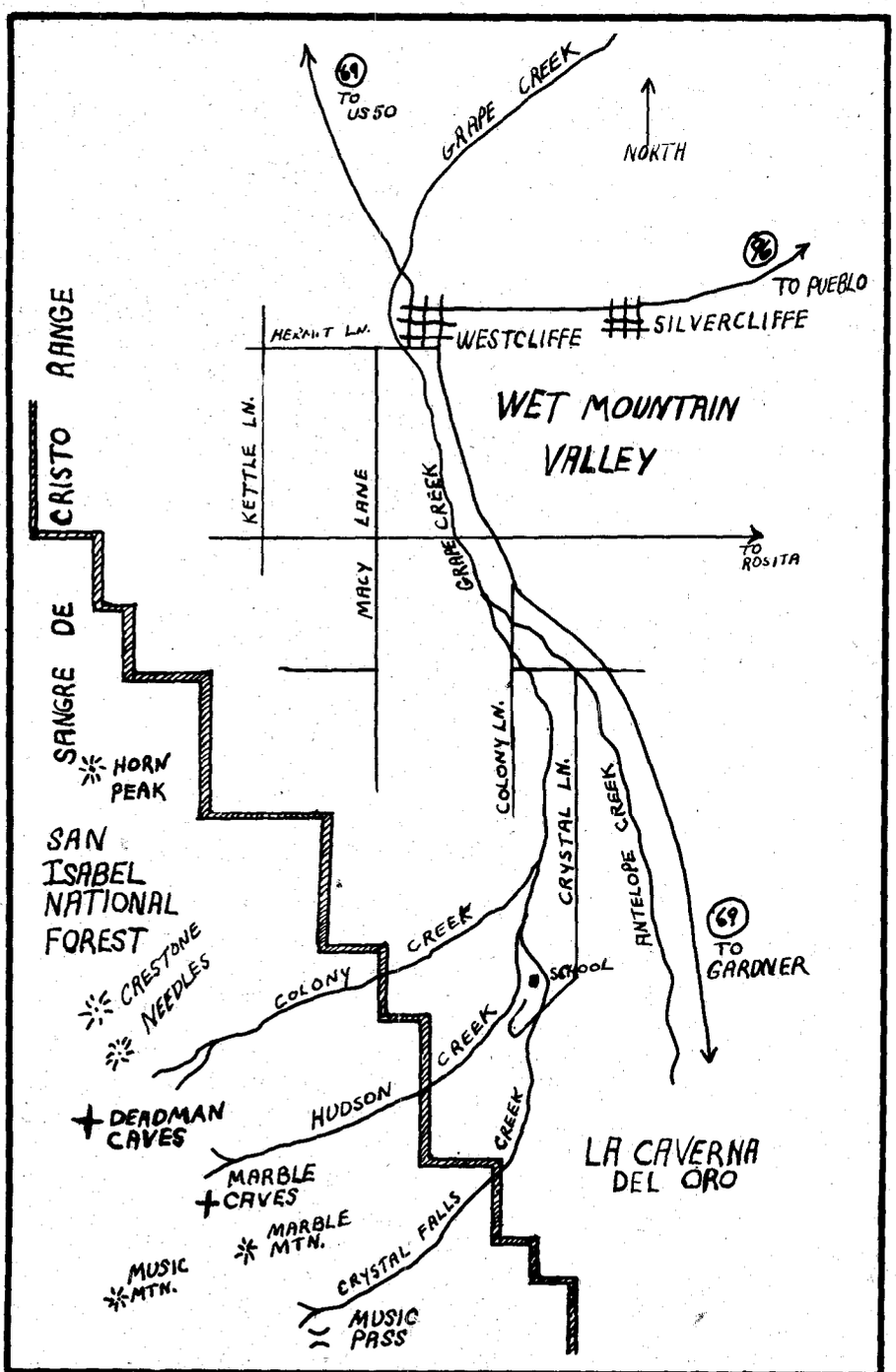
Spelunkers are cautious in telling about the mysterious treasures of caves, for they are afraid of too much public participation in their explorations. Caves are dangerous, even for these experts. There's great danger involved unless one is a competent cave man. Then too, the non-serious student of caves may well destroy and accidentally vandalize important findings.

Oftentimes, the non-scientific explorer, when he finds a cave, throws a rock or stone into it. The Maltese Cross above the entrance of Spanish Cave is now gone. It was slowly blasted out of the rock by hunters who looked upon the marker as nothing more than a target for testing their deer rifles.

Perhaps one of the many caves on Marble Mountain is the famous *La Caverna del Oro* of legend. But I am not sure.

You ask, "Why?" I'll tell you.

In the early days of Colorado just about everybody was a prospector, but few were experts. Still they all searched, for it was almost the way it




Sketch map of the Wet Mountain Valley of Colorado.

Sketched by the author



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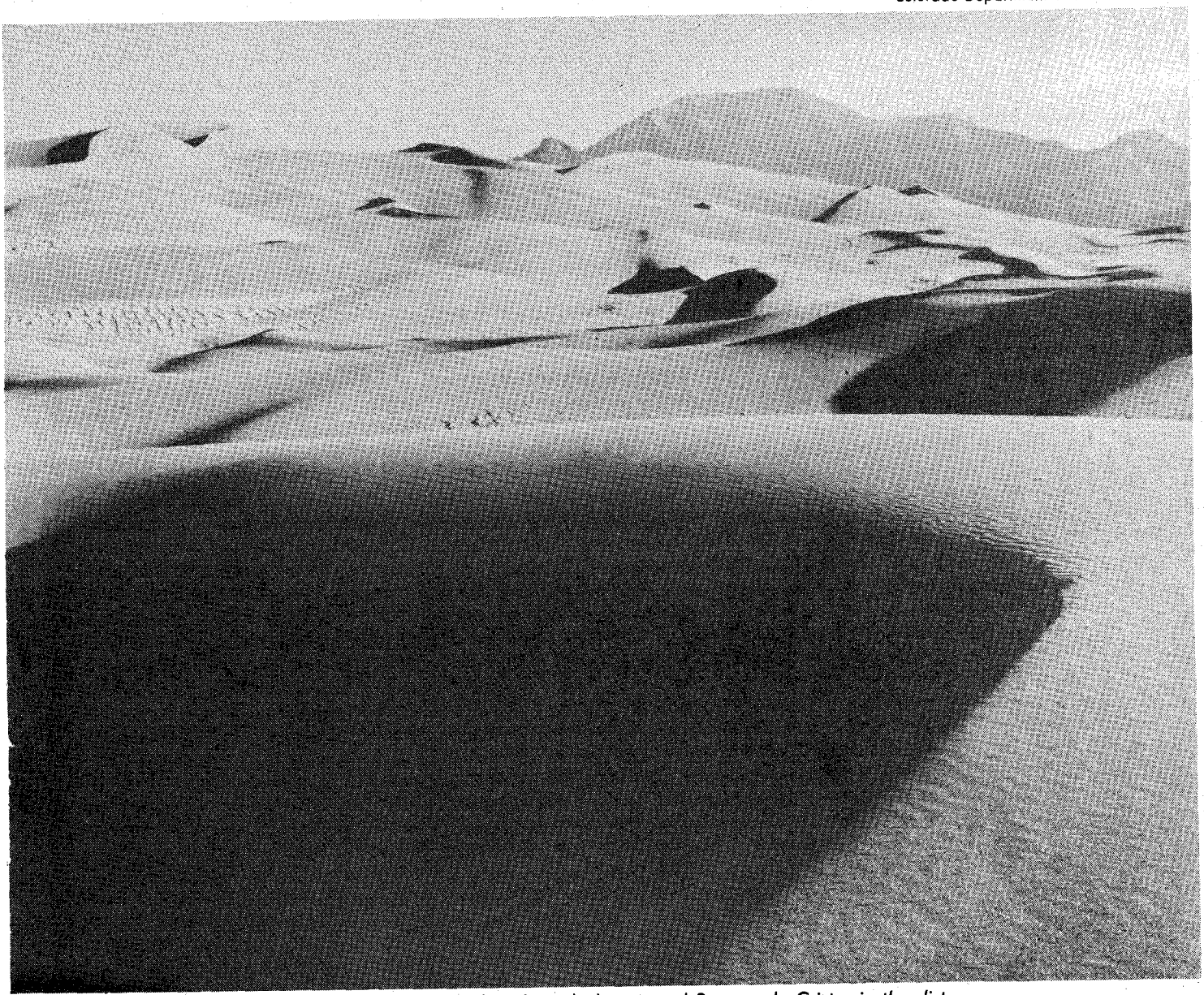

*The Great Sand Dunes of Colorado with the rugged Sangre de Cristos in the distance.*

is today. People worked at their various jobs during the week and then headed for the hills on the weekend.

Back in the 1880's, three spare-time prospectors were Dan de Foe, a Denver businessman; M. M. Warner, Aspen Attorney at Law; and another friend of de Foe known only as Burt. These three heard of the legendary Cave of Gold as well as the Golden Ledge in the Sangre de Cristos, for even back in the 1880's, the legends gained follower after follower over the years. More and more prospectors reported finding fairly rich gold float in the majestic mountain streams, but no one was ever able to find the Mother Lode.

Somehow the Golden Ledge found its way into legend as a mammoth *Golden Ledge* traversing the Sangre de Cristos. And according to this legend, it was the fabulously rich underground mine worked by the Spanish conquistadors. The three spare-time prospectors decided to spend their summer vacation looking for the ledge of gold. Their search extended far beyond the time they had allowed, for they looked for weeks on end without any luck, and just like die-hard fishermen, they just couldn't call it quits. Finally, as fall and the early frost came on, they decided to make one last try before heading for home.

On the way back from their final search, they were traveling through typical Sangre de Cristo country, where endless small hills edge the mountains with each hill covered with the same scrubby cedars and pinons. On one of the hills they stumbled on an old prospector's hole. Apparently, at one time the hole was much deeper, for it was full of loose dirt and rocks.

Going through some of the rocks in the hole, they came across what seemed to be a poor quality lead ore. The ore seemed typical enough for that part of the country, even though it was quite lean looking and not too promising and on the steep side of the hill. Yet the structure of the vein told them it might just be worth checking into.

They worked until nightfall, putting a ten-foot face around the hole and putting up location notices. They also tried to survey the area with a pocket compass and set up regulation claim markers at the corners. De Foe took notes and made detailed charts of the location while the other two were sorting the ore samples for the best ones to take back.

Finally they were satisfied that they had done the best job they could

*(continued on page 56)*



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# BEN HODGES

## Likeable Old Cuss Of Dodge City

By Harry E. Chatfield & Carolyn Day

**Ben Hodges was one of the best known black cowboys, con man, and all - around wheeler - dealer in Dodge City. His first flim-flam came when he passed himself off as an heir to an old Spanish Land Grant, the Grant giving title to tens of thousands of Texas acres. He had letters of credit from banks, passes on the railroads, and unlimited credit everywhere he went.**

COVER PAINTING

Denver Public Library, Western History Department

*Ben Hodges, colorful character of Dodge City. He came up from Texas trailing cattle and stayed on existing by his wit and his ability to win the confidence of well - to - do business men.*

An historical figure still remembered in Dodge City is a black man named Ben Hodges, the all - time monumental fraud, liar and clown of the one - time "wickedest city in the West". Arriving with one of the first trail herds from Texas, he became a magnificent confidence man as well as a competent forger and cattle thief.

Manipulating his neighbors' money and cattle, often to the amusement of the old - timers who loved any kind of a practical joke, Ben was very adept at talking his way into and out of trouble. Beady eyed, yet possessor of an infectious smile, short in stature (he was only five feet, one inch tall), weighing but one hundred and twenty pounds, he pulled off his escapades under the noses of lawmen such as Bat Masterson, Wyatt Earp, and "Mysterious" Dave Mather without getting as much as a fine!

Details of Ben Hodges' early years are, at best, sketchy. According to naturalization papers filed in 1919, he was born June 3, 1856 in Chihuahua, Mexico, the son of a Negro father and a Mexican mother. The family moved to the vicinity of San Antonio, Texas when he was a very young boy, and there he learned all the skills necessary to be a cowhand, a life which he took up while still in his



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teens. He subsequently became — so claimed those who knew him best — "a damn good roper, rider and wrangler". When the Texas cattlemen began trailing herds north to Kansas, it was a matter of course that Ben accompanied them. He reached Dodge City sometime in the late 1870's.

Just why Ben remained in the "sin town of the West" instead of returning to the cattle ranges of Texas has never been ascertained, but his decision was the beginning of a new kind of life — a life of humbuggery that put all the old roisterers to shame. Shortly after his arrival, he heard a widely discussed rumor that Mexican heirs had revived an old Spanish Land Grant that comprised most of the range upon which the 101 Ranch, the OK, Prairie Cattle Company, and ranchers of the Neutral Strip grazed thousands of head of cattle.

It was further reported that the rightful heirs of this vast tract of land were being sought in Texas, and from the very region in which Ben Hodges had grown to manhood! In spite of the fact that Ben's color and features strongly favored those of his father, he always claimed descent from an old Spanish family through his mother, and someone jokingly suggested that he should claim title to the Grant.

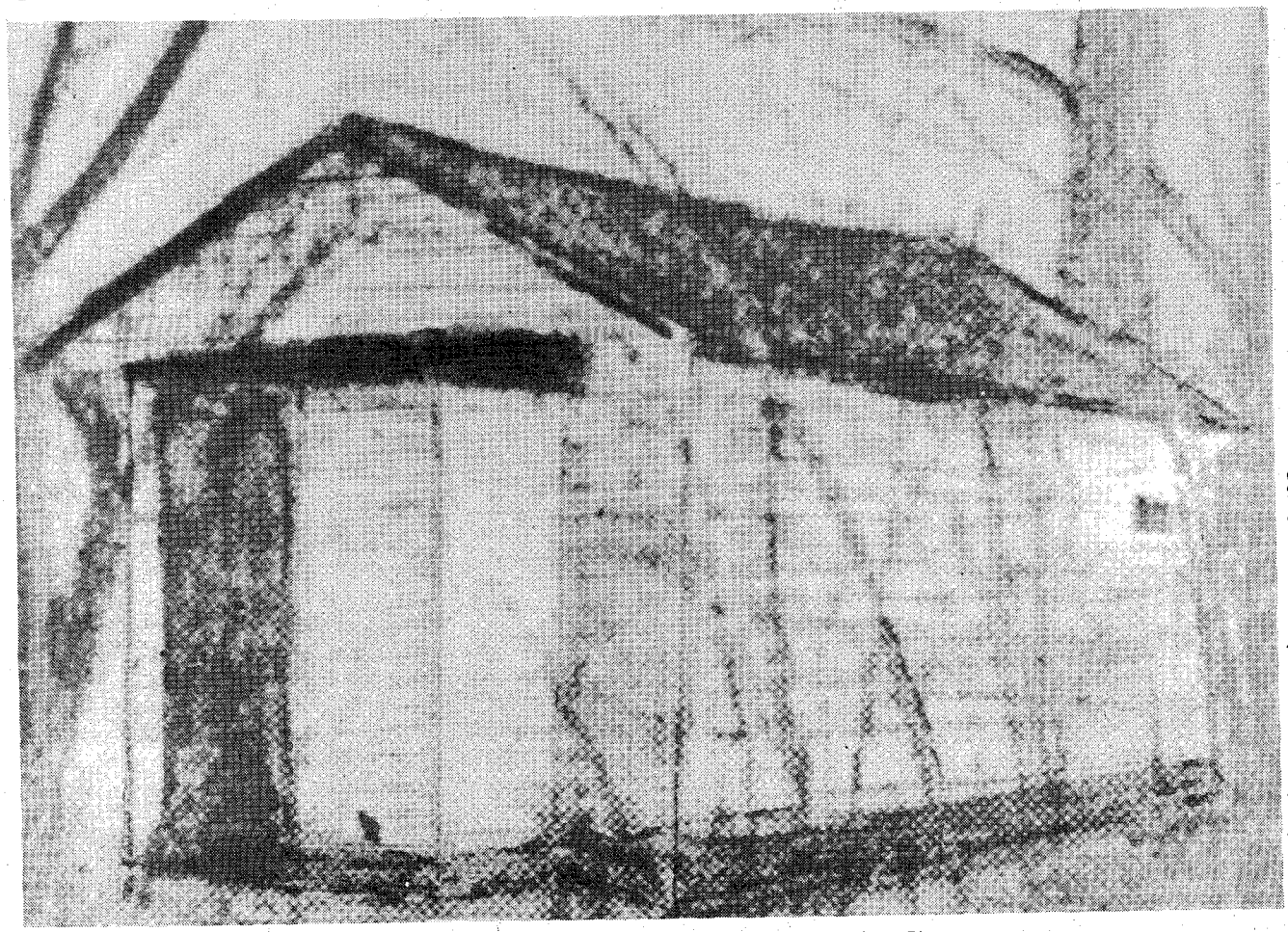
The wisecrack germinated an idea within Ben's mind, an opportunistic idea!

He made a hurried trip to Texas and returned with a numer of documents which stated that he was a legitimate claimant to the Land Grant as well as the legal representative of other heirs living in San Antonio. This brought much laughter from many of the townspeople, but a local lawyer, convinced that the documents were genuine, agreed to take Ben's case and draw up the necessary papers. Though the young cowhand had long ago spent the last of his trail pay, it did not deter his progress.

His persuasive manner and seeming sincerity prompted business men and city officials to "buy his case", some with hard - earned money. The most important support, however, came from the undeceived old - timers who, being resentful of the swaggering Johnny - come - latelys, enjoyed watching the hoax develop and assisted Ben in every conceivable manner, from the donation of money to the signing of affidavits and petitions. Even other cowhands, many of whom had ridden with him, gleeful that "an ignorant darkey could make such a stir out of nothing", picked up the story and prosecuted it to the fullest extent.

As the flame of publicity fanned from the Cherokee Strip to the Purgatoire River, most of the area cattlemen, aware that anything could happen in the West, added their support to Ben's claims as insurance against disaster in case he was victorious in the courts. As a result, the enterprising cowhand became a man of prominence, and when he asked for credit, he usually got it. Taking advantage of the competitive spirit of the business men, he proceeded to go on a one - man credit spree.

As one shopkeeper would watch Ben's rise to affluency being supplied for free from a competitor's store, he would enter the competition and contribute added fuel to the climb. Now, when Ben wanted a new saddle, a fine six - gun, gold - inlaid spurs or an expensive pair of chaps, all he had to do was mention his needs among the merchants of Dodge, and his requirements were filled. Not all storekeepers, of course, were deluded; a number joined the bandwagon simply because the show was worth the price.



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*Ben Hodges' cabin along the river bank at Dodge City.*



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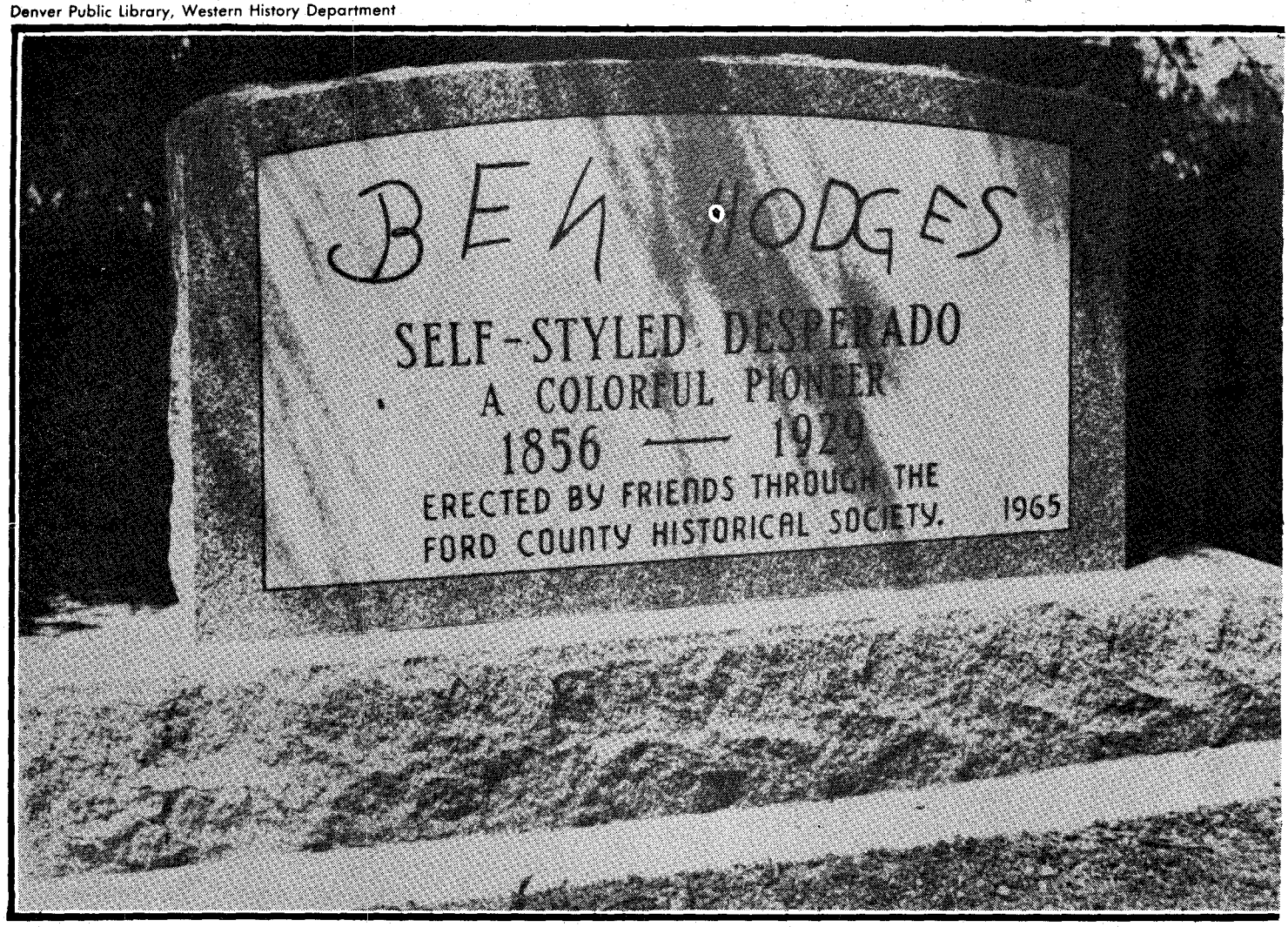


*Monument at Ben Hodges' gravesite at Dodge City.*

At length, Judge Sterry of Emporia, a noted Kansas attorney who was impressed by Ben's assertions, took the case on a contingency basis, contributing both time and money. The litigation dragged along in the lower courts before coming to the attention of the Supreme Court.

In the meantime, Ben used his newly acquired prestige to cook up other schemes. One of the most skillfully contrived of these was made possible by a fire which destroyed the Wright & Beverly store and sent the firm's four - ton safe crashing into the basement. The huge steel box landed on its doors, putting the contents securely out of circulation for a considerable time.

Previously, Ben had learned that thirty - two sections of land in Gray County were open for settlement. Obtaining a detailed tax listing of this land from the Gray County Treasurer, he now went to the U.S. Land Office in Garden City, asked for the Land Commissioner, and informed him that he, Ben Hodges, owned thirty - two sections of land in Gray County which had been filed on by "his cowboys". He then produced the extensive and legal - appearing list, warning the Commissioner not to throw open one part of this land. Ben further stated that the signed affidavits to the land, given him by the cowhands, were now in the safe resting on its doors in the fire - ravaged Wright & Beverly store. He told his story so convincingly that the Commissioner never suspected the whole thing to be a clever fraud.

Ben next appeared at the Dodge City National Bank where he explained to the president, a newcomer, that the affidavits of transfer proving his ownership of the land had been temporarily tied up because of the Wright & Beverly fire. Producing his detailed list of holdings once again, Hodges asked the bank president for a letter of credit, suggesting that he consult the U.S. Land Commissioner in Garden City for details of the matter.

The shrewd cowhand talked so persuasively that the banker wrote the requested letter or credit, testifying to "Ben Hodges' ownership of thirty - two sections of good, Gray County land!" Using this letter in conjunction with the land listing, he obtained two more letters of credit from other Dodge financial institutions — letters which confirmed not only his ownership of the land but also his honesty, sobriety and frugality!

With these letters of credit, Ben obtained complimentary passes from the railroads, convincing them that he was a cattle baron, and completely bamboozled businessmen and cattlemen alike, except for men like Bob Wright, Print Olive and Martin Culver, who shook their heads in disbelief at such double - dealing and chicanery.

Ben Hodges' fraudulent ways, however, were soon to come to a temporary halt, for the Supreme Court by this time was getting into the nitty - gritty of his claim to the Spanish Land Grant. Bob Wright, Chalkey Beeson, I. P. Olive, Martin Culver, and other reputable Dodge City citizens were requested to



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make personal recommendations to support his assertions and character. They responded with such a downgrading of the little cowpuncher that his claim was immediately thrown out of court, and he escaped prosecution for fraud only by what was to become his trademark — a glib tongue and a likable personality.

But the repercussions from the court decision had scarcely calmed when another fateful event put Ben's ever - opportunistic mind into swindling gear. Two cattlemen partners, John Lytle and Major Conklin, and their agent, Martin Culver, while driving thirty herds toward Dodge, had become separated by a spring storm which scattered much of their livestock. Lytle continued north to deliver cattle, Major Conklin going to Kansas City to attend to business there, while Culver remained in Dodge to receive stray cattle as they were recovered. Culver offered to pay one dollar a head for Lytle and Conklin cattle retrieved, making payment with receipts which were to be redeemed by Major Conklin.

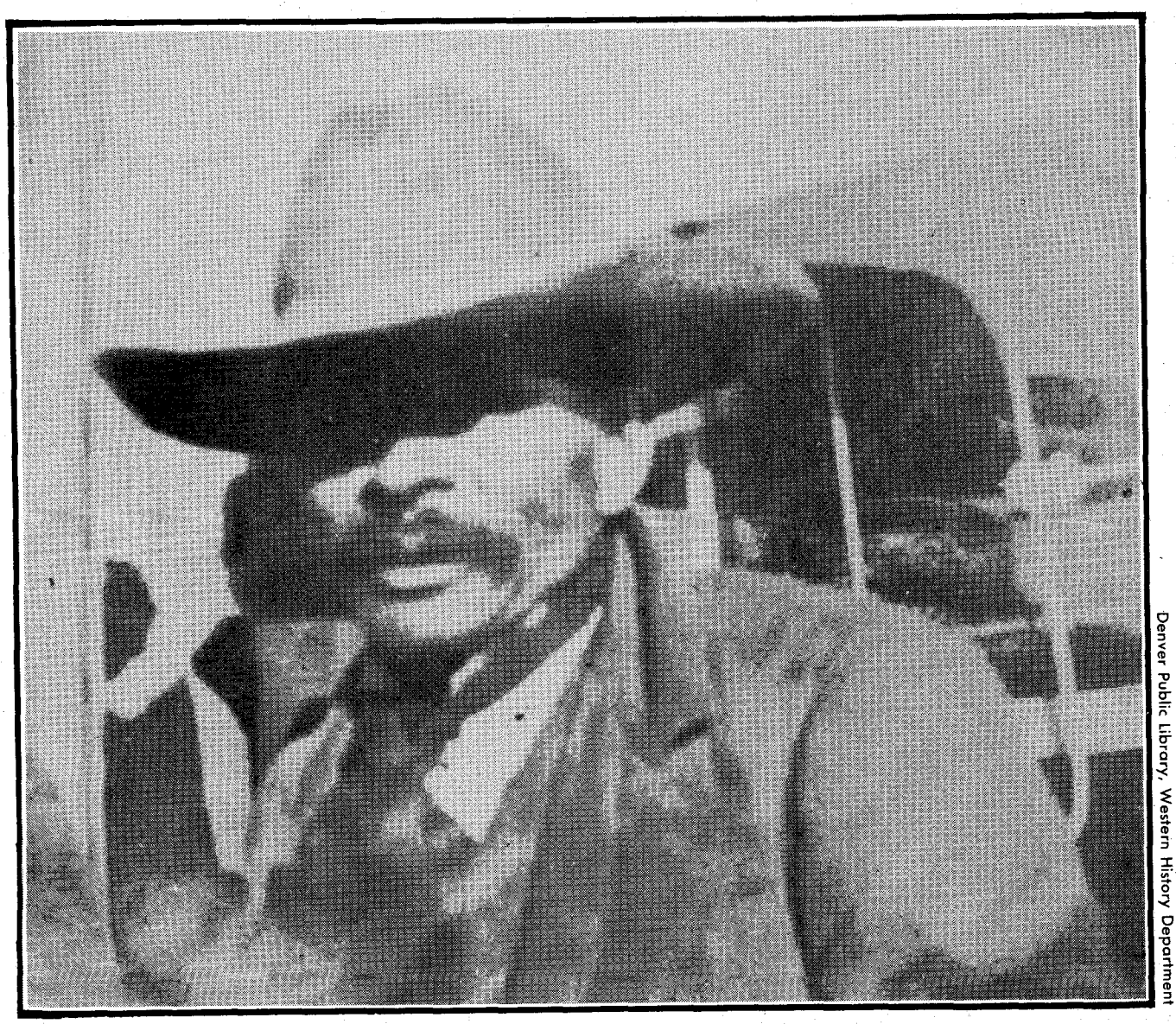
The weakness of this system of doing business was immediately apparent to Ben, who promptly visited Major Conklin in Kansas City, presenting forged receipts for several hundred Lytle and Conklin cattle. Conklin did not question the genuine - looking receipts, but he decided that the poor and "ignorant" black cowboy was a good prospect with whom to drive a hard bargain. So he made an offer less than the agreed - upon sum, finally making payment by financing Ben's room and board, buying him a complete new outfit, and giving him sixty dollars.

A short time later, Lytle arrived in Kansas City, Conklin meeting him in the bar of the St. James Hotel. Present were a number of cattlemen, drinking and talking, who listened with interest when Conklin boasted of his deal.

"John," he began, producing the forged receipts, "I made a shrewd business deal and got your receipts for several hundred cattle for less than half price, from Ben Hodges"

Enough was said. The other cattlemen who knew Ben all too well exploded with a round of hilarious laughter, finally informing the Major that he was the victim of a classic swindle. For a brief moment Conklin was dumbfoundedly silent; then he joined in the laughter. He had quickly decided it was better to accept the loss and set up the drinks than take the matter to court where he would have to explain his "shrewdness" in bargaining with the black cowhand.

*(continued on page 52)*



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*One of the earliest pictures of Ben Hodges.*



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# GHOST TOWNS I HAVE KNOWN

Courtesy Museum of New Mexico

*General View of White Oaks, New Mexico, circa 1895. Billy the Kid often used this town as a base for his rustling operations.*

# WHITE OAKS, NEW MEXICO

By Leonard H. Boucher

**Perhaps the one man who might haunt the ghost town known as White Oaks, New Mexico, would be John J. Baxter who rediscovered the gold diggings that were first mined by the Spaniards many, many years before. Baxter found gold, then others flocked in. More than 4,000 people lived there in its heyday but a few hardy souls live there now.**

John J. Baxter, nursing a glass of whiskey, sat at the bar of a cantina in San Antonio, a small Mexican village in what was destined to become the State of New Mexico. A frustrated "49er", Baxter was bemoaning the fates that had so far prevented him from striking it rich. The Mexican bartender listened intently to what his customer had to say.

"You know," Baxter was saying, "I'd like to strike it rich, just once," he nodded his head. "Yes, just once before I die." He paused a moment, then mused. "I wonder what it's like to be rich?"

The bartender smiled. "I don't know, *senor*. I have never been rich. Also *senor*, I have never had the desire to search for the gold." He leaned across the bar. "But *senor,"* he said softly, "I can tell you where to find the gold if you are willing to work for it."

Baxter's head shot up. He grasped the bartender's arm tightly. When he spoke, there was eagerness in his voice.

"Gold!" he shouted. "Where!"

The bartender put a warning finger to his lips. "Not so



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loud, *senor,"* he cautioned. "This place has many ears."

"But," protested Baxter, "I just heard you say that you know where I can find gold."

"So I did, *senor,* and I do know, but the place is many miles to the east over the lava beds. As a small boy, I passed through this place with my father who was a trader and not interested in the hard work that is necessary to mine the gold. He told me that the spot had been mined by the Spaniards, many, many years ago."

Baxter was dubious. "Oh yeah," he countered. "Just because your father said there was gold there doesn't make it so."

"But *senor,"* protested the barkeep, "the gold is there. I saw it with my own eyes, just below the spring."

Baxter rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "All right, so there is gold there; but if this is true, the place must be swarming with prospectors."

The barkeep shook his head. "Not so, *senor.* I have many friends who pass through there each month, and if gold was being mined, they would have told me. You see, *senor,"* he continued, "the gold is in the gulch, and travelers go around the gulch instead of into it. That is the reason they have not found the gold. *No es verdad?"*

Baxter, whose Spanish was limited to *Si* and *No,* replied, "er ... sure, *Si, no es verdad."*

The bartender's mouth split into a wide grin. "You speak Spanish, *senor?"*

A sheepish smile spread over the prospector's face. "Heck no," he admitted, "I can't even order a cup of coffee in that language."

The barkeep shrugged his shoulders, "Ah well," he sighed, "it does not matter. Are you good at following directions?"

Baxter paused. "I dunno," he said, "depends on the directions. But," he added quickly, "I can follow a map."

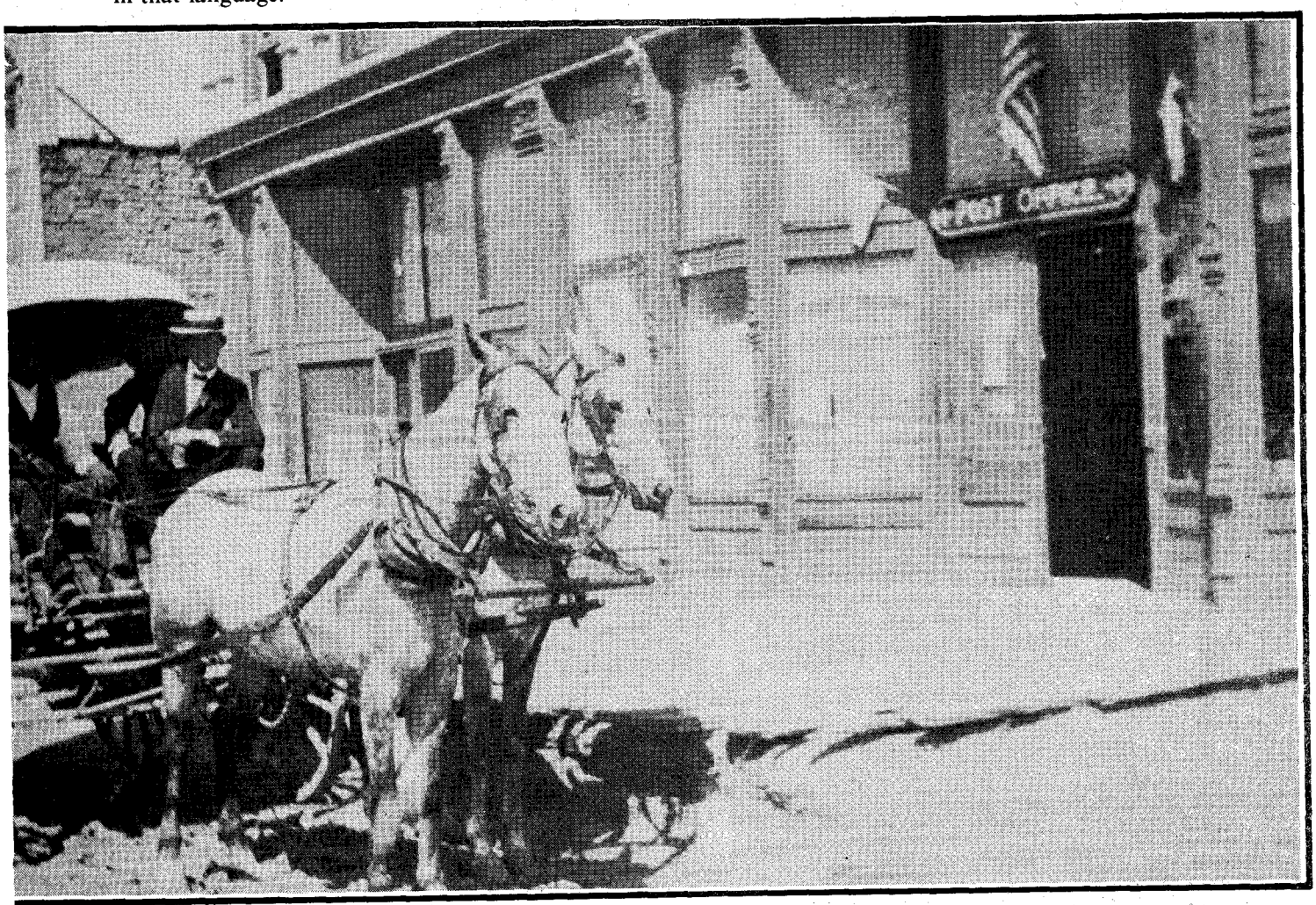
"A map. Of course. I will draw you a map, *senor,* and if you follow it to the letter, it will lead you directly to the gold."

Drunk or sober, there was one thing that could have been said about Baxter. He had the directional instincts of a homing pigeon. Unerringly, he followed the tracings on the map, and after several weeks of hard travel, he arrived at his destination, a deep gulch dotted with white oak trees and graced by a spring of cool, clear water.

Baxter unloaded his back burro and looked around. He wasn't very impressed. Sure didn't look like any of the other gold fields he had worked. "Oh well," he mused, "As long as I'm here ..."

He dug the gold pan out of his pack and dipped up a pan of sand a few paces below the spring. He washed the sand carefully and was rewarded with a few small grains of gold.

For the next few weeks, Baxter prospected the creek bed, taking out about thirty-five dollars a week ... not much, but a beginning. However, it wasn't long before the meager returns palled upon him, and he decided to seek more fertile fields. He eyed the mountain above the gulch. "If there is gold in the gulch," he reasoned, "there must be gold in the mountain." So, taking his pick in his hand, up the mountain he went.




*Post Office and mail hack at White Oaks, 1910.*



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An experienced prospector, Baxter knew exactly what he was looking for, and he found it in an outcropping of rock that was heavily saturated with veins of gold. He dug into the mountain and uncovered a rich deposit of gold ore. It was a highly emotional moment for this man whose only claim to wealth was his prospecting equipment and the clothes on his back. Hurriedly, he staked out and filed on his claim, then he set about to make his fortune.

By this time, the word had gotten out that, "There is gold in *that there* gulch," and prospectors flocked in by the hundreds. Soon the hills on both sides of the gulch were dotted with tents, and the ring of steel against steel constituted a continuous din as the miners pushed their way deep into the bowels of the mountain.

All this busy activity was lost upon Baxter who toiled away until he had worked his mine to the tune of several hundred dollars. Then, without any warning whatsoever, he walked off the claim. He didn't sell it or give it away—he just left. A nomad by nature, Baxter's itchy feet would allow him to remain in one area for just so long, then he would move on. In this case, he headed for Silver City, where in 1885 he was reported killed during an Indian raid on the Gila River. The prospector who restaked Baxter's claim eventually made a fortune from it.

White Oaks, as the community was now called, grew by leaps and bounds, and Baxter's Gulch, by now literally saturated with small mining claims, was right in the middle of it. Two men who contributed to the history of White Oaks because of an unusual event were John V. Winters and Tom Wilson, partners in a small mining operation.

These two men worked their claim day after day, barely eking out a living. It was backbreaking work, and Tom Wilson, like John Baxter, was plagued by itchy feet. It was time to move on, but to where? To work out his problem, Wilson took the day off and hiked up the mountain side to think things over.

He sat down on a boulder and kicked idly at a piece of rock that was sticking up out of the ground. It loosened and rolled away from him, and the glint of metal caught his eye. He picked up the rock and examined it closely. The metal he had seen *was* gold. With the ore sample tightly grasped in his hand, he raced down the mountain to tell his partner the good news.

Soon the two men were back at the site with picks and shovels, and several hours later, they struck pay dirt. They staked and filed on the claim, then they feverishly set about digging out the precious metal. The first ore sent to the mill was a big disappointment. It assayed no more than the ore from the gulch, so Wilson's itchy feet started to itch more than ever. It was time to move on.

Tom Wilson approached Winters, offering to sell his half of the mine, and Winters, who had known for sometime that something was troubling his partner, drawled, "Well, shore, Tom, if yore really set on goin', but I ain't got nothin' to buy you out with!"

"Well, John. How much you got?"

Winters scratched his head. "Well, lessee! I got two dollars in silver, about forty in gold, and I suppose *I could* throw in my last bottle of whiskey!"

Wilson didn't quibble. He took what was offered, signed over his half of the claim to Winters, and departed for parts unknown. He had been a man of mystery from the start.

He had never offered any information as to his past life, and he offered none as to his future. With the exception of his short sojourn in White Oaks, he could well have been the man who never existed.

John Winters, on the other hand, was a plodder. When he started a project, he stayed with it for as long as it was a paying proposition. At the present time his mine was concerned, that was about all he could expect.

Day after day, week after week, Winters labored at his mine. Ton after ton of low grade ore was shipped to the mills, but in spite of the meager returns, Winters did not give up. He redoubled his efforts, driving deeper and deeper into the bowels of the mountain; and then, when all his efforts seemed in vain, he *hit* it. Gold! Heavy veins of gold! Winters rushed samples to the assay office and found that the ore ran $40,000 to the ton.

Winters was about the happiest man on earth. Now he could have the things he had always wanted and do the things he had always wanted to do. But it was not to be. Before he was able to savor those pleasures in life, he sickened and died.

His heirs, who were not interested in mining, sold the claim to a James Seigfurst for $50,000. Seigfurst named it the North Homestake. It was $50,000 well spent, for by the year 1904, the mine returned to its owner over one half million dollars.

That must have been an era of miners with itchy feet. Abe Whiteman wandered into the gulch one day, puttered around a bit, then staked a claim a short distance above the North Homestake. He worked it half - heartedly for a while then abruptly sold out to William Watson for a dollar. Whiteman hadn't known it, but he had been sitting on a fortune. The Old Abe, as the mine was called, spewed out a cool $3,000,000 by 1930. Not a bad yield on a $1.00 investment, and who knows how much more it would have poured into the pockets of its owners had it not been destroyed by fire in 1930?

Most of the claims in Baxter's Gulch and on Baxter's Mountain were low producers. The only ones that really made money for the owners were the North Homestake, the South Homestake, the Old Abe, Rip Van Winkle, Little Mack and the Comstock.

During its heyday, White Oaks was known as the "Busiest Little Town in the Southwest". It had a population of 4000, and money would buy about anything available. There were four sections to the town: Hogtown, Tent Town, Shanty Town and Boot Hill. Hogtown was where the action was, being blessed with the most saloons, the most gambling, whiskey and prostitutes.

I first visited White Oaks in July 1926, and as I recall, it was still booming. Of course, most of the old western flavor was gone, but not all. There were still more horses in evidence than cars, and more than a few hitching racks were to be seen. When I returned to White Oaks in August, 1972, I received the shock of my life. My whole being registered disbelief as I stared down White Oaks Avenue. Except for one crumbling store building, there was nothing. Absolutely nothing. The three-story brick schoolhouse still stands between White Oaks Avenue and Baxter's Gulch, and just north of the gulch, a few broken - down old buildings are valiantly fighting a losing battle with Mother Nature.

As with most pioneer western towns, White Oaks had its good elements and its bad. There were probably more honest, law abiding citizens in town than those with a criminal bent, and like all honest citizens, they enjoyed the better things in life, such as baseball, horse racing, and foot racing. Since the miners worked a six-day week, all these events took place on Sunday.

The White Oaks baseball team was a dandy. It won so consistently that it soon became known as the team to



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beat. Horse racing was all local talent and good, clean entertainment.

One of the more popular sports was foot racing. There were events for everyone: boys, girls, men, women, fat men, fat women, etc., and if the events were anything like those of my youth, there had to be a rolling - pin throwing contest.

Most any small town that came into being during the building of the west could boast at least one noted personality — White Oaks had several. Conrad Hilton, the millionaire hotel owner, is said to have started there, as did H. B. Fergusson, a lawyer who became a member of Congress. The first governor of the State of New Mexico, William McDonald, was a resident of White Oaks, as was railroad promoter and builder, E. B. Eddy. William Bonney (Billy the Kid) was a frequent visitor, and he sometimes used the town as his base of operations while rustling cattle.

Henry J. Patterson, owner and operator of the Star Saloon, was not a famous man, but he did contribute to the social life and to the history of White Oaks by establishing an opera house.

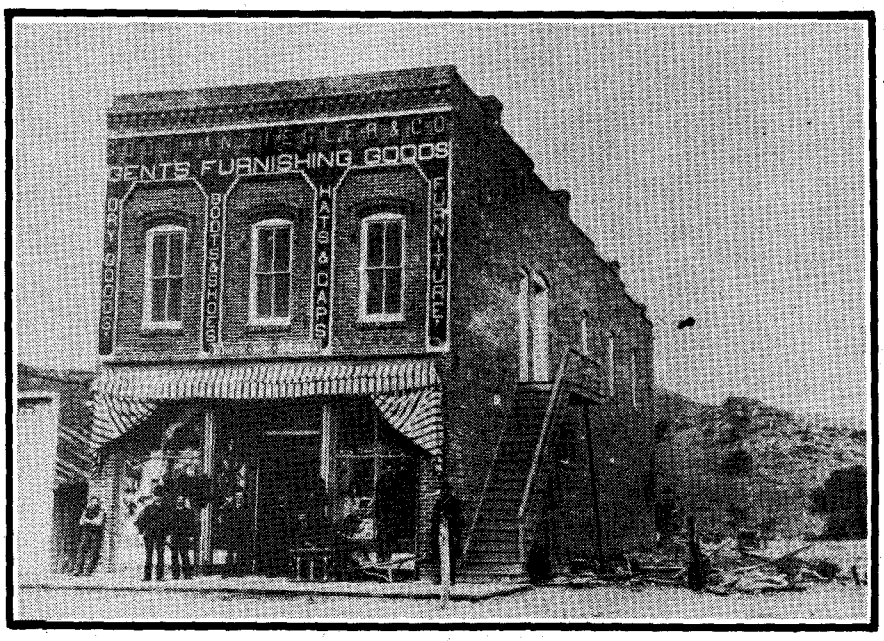
Patterson had been working on the idea for some time, but he had put off doing anything about it until he was sure it would be well received. As it turned out, the opera was an instant success. The troupe of performers he engaged furnished good, clean entertainment, and Patterson paid them well. But alas, the money was destined never to leave White Oaks. The actors lost it all at Patterson's gaming tables, and they had to put on several additional performances in order to get enough money to leave town.

By the year 1887, White Oaks had reached a population of about 4000. I don't believe it ever exceeded that figure, but it did have the potential.

There were those who were sure that White Oaks was destined to become a great metropolis, and perhaps it could have happened. Fate, combined with greed, decreed otherwise, and early after the turn of the century, White Oaks began to decline.

The decline was slow, and I don't believe the average citizen realized what was happening, but the mine owners knew. High-grade ore production was down, and that was one of the problems. When the Old Abe Mine, the last big producer, caught fire and burned, it was the last straw.

In the 1880's, Matthew Hoyle, a mine foreman, had so much faith in the future of White Oaks that he built a $42,000 mansion in which he intended to install his future bride. Hoyle had not seen the girl or written to her for several years, yet he was egotistical enough to believe that she was still waiting for him. Love is an unpredictable thing, however, and when Hoyle traveled east to claim his bride, the girl rejected him.




Courtesy Museum of New Mexico

*Goodman-Ziegler & Co. Store in White Oaks, New Mexico, 1895.*

A dejected, utterly crushed Matthew Hoyle turned away and disappeared into nowhere. He never returned to White Oaks and was never seen or heard from again. Meanwhile, Hoyle's Folly, as the mansion became known, was rented to Hoyle's brother by the bank that held the mortgage. The house still stands and is occupied by a couple who purchased the property a few years back and who, I understand, are in the process of restoring it.

Greed was another factor that contributed to the decline of White Oaks. Men who walk about with dollar signs for eyes oft-times let their sense of values run away with their *good* sense. This was never more in evidence than when the Santa Fe, Kansas City & Mexican Railway decided to lay tracks from Socorro to White Oaks, and E. B. Eddy decided likewise from El Paso, Texas. Eddy even went so far as to freight in several loads of ties and other materials in order to be ready to roll as soon as the negotiations for the rights of way had been settled.

Meanwhile, the White Oaks property owners had gotten together and decided to hold on to their lands until the railway companies met their asking price. They figured that the tracks *had* to pass through White Oaks, and therefore their prices had to be met. They made a *bad* mistake. Eddy took one look at the ridiculously high asking price, loaded up his ties and returned to El Paso.

The S. K. & M. just as calmly bypassed White Oaks and ran their line to Carrizozo. The dumbfounded property owners, realizing that their get-rich scheme had backfired, hurried to make peace overtures to the railroad companies, but in vain. The damage had been done.

Had White Oaks gotten the railroads, it is possible that it might have survived in spite of the closed gold mines, but that of course, is pure speculation.

Cedarvale, White Oaks cemetery, seems to have withstood the rigors of time and weather very well. About one half of the markers are made from wood from which Mother Nature has long since erased names and dates. The other half is made up of marble or granite. These latter monuments have withstood the elements of time very well, and the inscriptions on most of them are still quite legible. One of them caught my eye. It is from the headstone of a two - month - old baby girl dated January - March 1895. The inscription is short, but to the point, and it does convey a message:

"Budded on earth, to bloom in heaven." ●**RW**

REFERENCE SOURCES:

White Oaks Eagle, 1899 through 1906; Lincoln County Leader, 1890 through 1892., Personal recollections and interviews.



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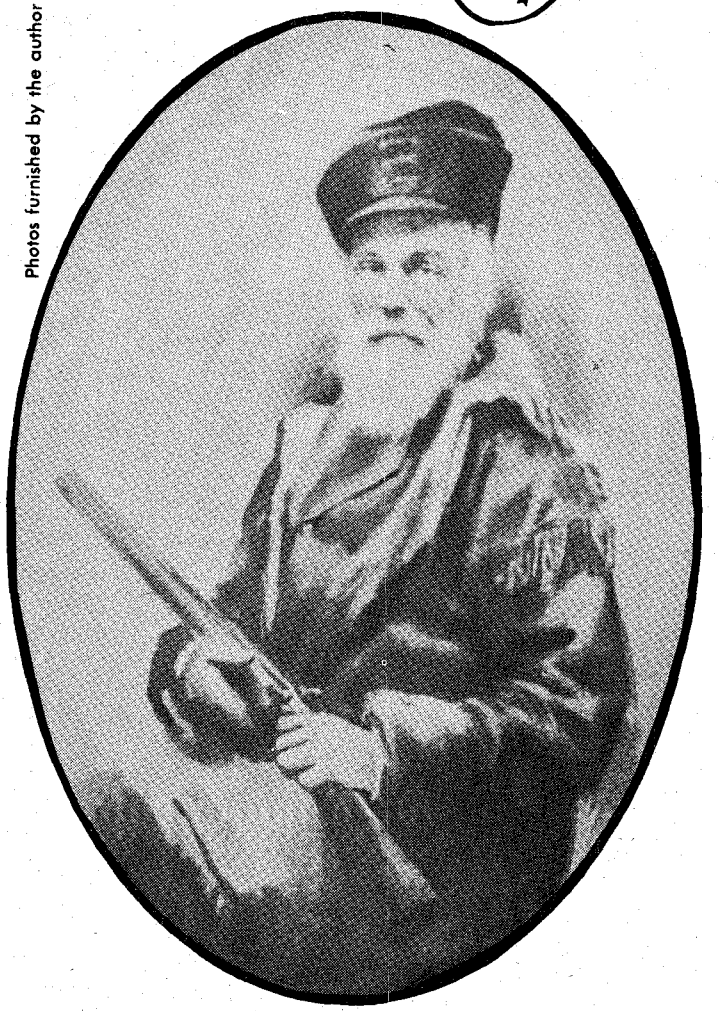
# HORSE THIEVERY IN THE EARLY WEST

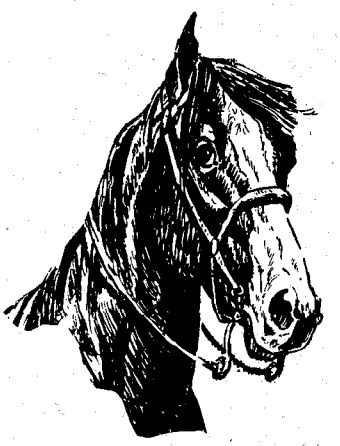
COVER STORY

By Mack Sherrill

Photos furnished by the author



**In the Old West, murder could be forgiven more quickly than horse stealing. Still, it was common practice and an honorable practice among the Indians. The Crows of the Northern Plains were greatly admired for their skill and daring in this pursuit. However, a man was more apt to be hung for this crime than for shooting somebody.**



*Joseph Walker, one of the first mountain men to enter California. One of his party, Bill Williams, seeing the number of horses running "wild", came back and helped himself, trailing the horses east to the plains where there was a high demand for horses.*

Horse stealing was probably the greatest crime one could commit in the Old West. It was also considered a fine art among the devotees of this nefarious skill.

Horse stealing was a hanging offense, yet paradoxically it was considered the epitome of boldness and daring under certain circumstances.

A horse was an absolute necessity to man in the vastness of mountains and desert. He would rather be deprived of weapons and food than lose his horse and be left afoot. At times, even murder might be overlooked in a frontier society and shrugged off as the result of a personal feud, but a horse thief would be shot or hanged on the spot without recourse to law.

On the other hand, horse stealing was a common practice among some of the Indians, and it was developed as a skill much admired. The Crows of the Northern Plains were considered to be the bravest, most daring and most successful of all. Of course, they stole only from their enemies. Also, one should be reminded that an individual's wealth in that society was measured by the number of horses he owned.

The mountain men of the early 1800's learned to survive by adopting the Indian way of life, and some of them accepted horse stealing as a part of it.

Most historians seem embarrassed and evasive about this apparent contradiction in the lives of their folk heroes. They prefer to portray the mountain men as seven feet tall, brave, honest, and God - fearing, so the horse stealing episodes are usually overlooked. (Do we want our school children to read that some of our folk heroes were horse thieves?)



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Photos furnished by the author

*Wild Horses being herded. From a painting by Alred Jacob Miller.*

## CALIFORNIA HORSES

While the plains Indians stole horses, mostly from the neighboring tribes they warred with, there came a time in the 1830's when California horses were introduced by the mountain men. Some of those horses were purchased or traded for, legitimately, but large numbers were stolen.

Captain Joe Walker and a fur - trapping party of forty men pioneered a trail to California in 1833, wintered there, and returned to the East in 1834. Crossing the Sierra Nevada Range at Mono Pass, they were the first white men to see Yosemite Valley. Walker Lake in Nevada and Walker Pass in California were named for this leader.

When the Walker party left California, they were driving 315 horses in addition to other livestock. One source implies that the horses were stolen, but the consensus is that furs were traded for them. There is no evidence that Walker, an ex - sheriff, ever stole any horses. In fact, he made a business of *buying* California horses to sell east of the Rockies in subsequent years.

However, men in his party observed hundreds of horses grazing the Caliofrnia hills, virtually wild, and they got other ideas. If these horses could be gathered in large numbers and driven across the desert and mountains to the Great Plains, their trade value would be enormous.

One such character in the Walker party was Old Bill Williams, one of the most colorful of the mountain men. He is known to have returned to California on at least two horse stealing expeditions. Following is a vignette from a biography of Old Bill Williams by A.H. Favour:

"One day in the early thirties, some three hundred mules and horses were being driven toward Bent's Fort on the Arkansas (River). Out front, leading the band, was a buckskin - clad trapper, with long hair and whiskers worn mountain - man fashion, mounted on an Indian pony. On each side of the main band of horses was a rider, not unlike the leader in dress and general appearance, who occasionally turned back into the band a stray horse which had broken out. Bringing up the rear were some half - dozen riders with a couple of pack mules. All the horses and mules were footsore and jaded and the men in charge were grimy with dirt, their clothes ragged and worn.

"Charles Bent, one of the proprietors, had no doubt been awaiting the approaching party, for on their arrival he mounted a horse and went outside to greet them. The man riding the lead horse was Bill Williams. The greeting was brief: 'Wagh, old hoss,' on one side, and 'How, Bill,' on the other. They shook hands leaning out of their saddles and conversing for a short time.



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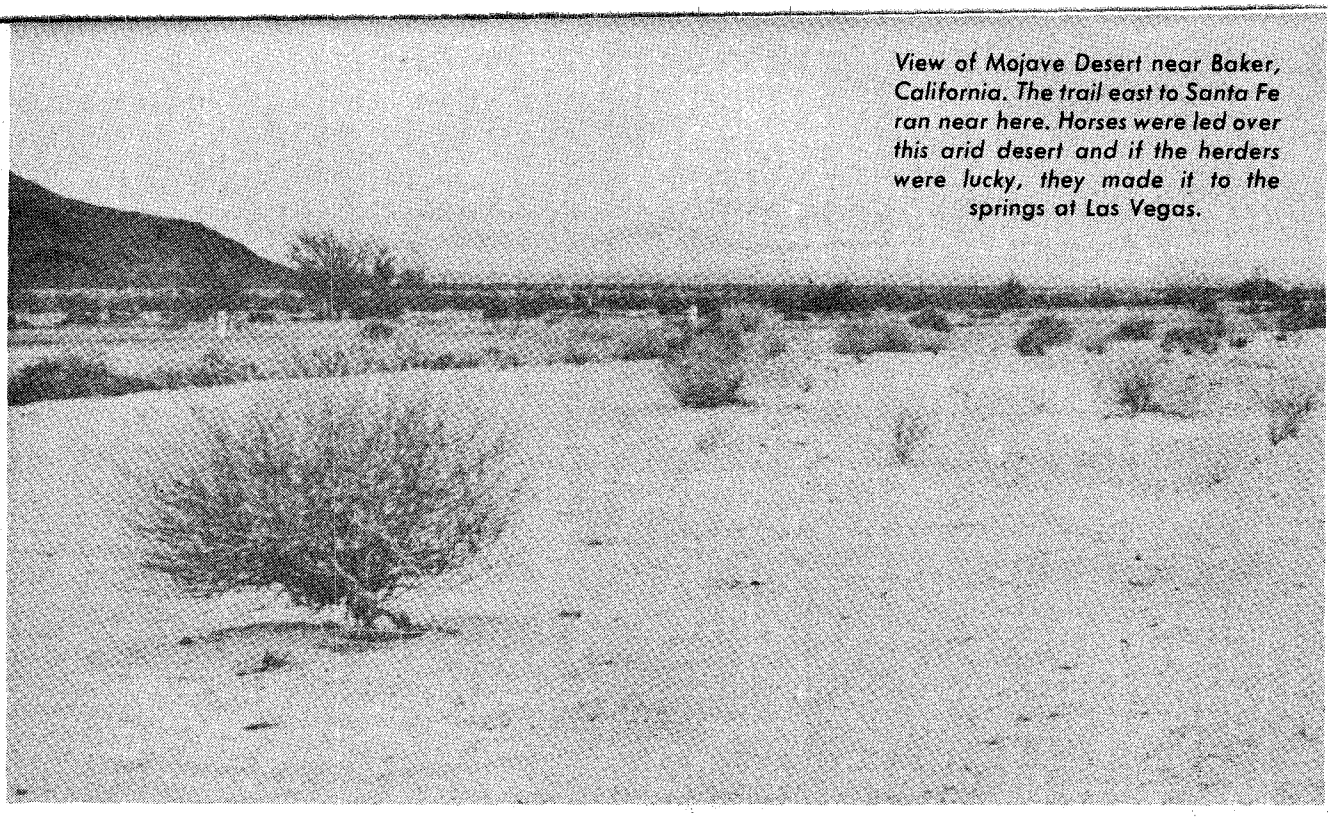

*View of Mojave Desert near Baker, California. The trail east to Santa Fe ran near here. Horses were led over this arid desert and if the herders were lucky, they made it to the springs at Las Vegas.*

Photos furnished by the author

"Bent looked over the band of horses indicated. He didn't have to ask any questions. They were California horses. Possession meant ownership, although they carried various brands and some had their ears split. It was a fair offer and a trade was soon made."

Old Bill Williams was less fortunate on a subsequent horse stealing foray. He organized a party that went to Southern California and succeeded in rounding up fifteen hundred head of mules and horses. Pursued by the Californians out across the Mojave Desert, the thieves lost about two - thirds of the herd from the fatigue of overdriving and from lack of water and food. Then, after reaching Utah, Indians caught Williams and his men off guard and drove off every horse they had left, including the mounts they were riding. They were obliged to return to Santa Fe (New Mexico), their destination, on foot.

## PEG LEG SMITH

Peg Leg Smith is usually remembered for two things: he amputated his own leg, and he holds the record for horse stealing in California.

A trapping accident in the Rocky Mountains resulted in the amputation of his own leg. When it healed, he fashioned himself a wooden leg and the handicap apparently never inconvenienced him to any extent. He was a famous horseman and spent most of his life in the saddle.

In the years around 1840, he made a career of organizing expeditions into California to steal horses.

Probably the greatest horse theft on record was led by Peg Leg Smith and the Negro frontiersman, Jim Beckwourth. They entered California by the southern route and succeeded in getting out with three thousand horses. No details are available, but Peg Leg joined the Gold Rush of 1849 and is remembered for bragging about his horse stealing exploits in the saloons of the Mother Lode.

## THE ESCAPE ROUTE

On present - day U.S. Interstate Highway 15, about ten miles east of Baker, California, is a roadside rest where one has a sweeping view of the arid Mojave Desert. It's difficult to visualize three thousand horses being driven across this wasteland. Motorists whizzing by in air - conditioned cars on this main artery connecting Los Angeles with Las Vegas, "The Fun Capital of the World," seem oblivious to the harsh landscape. Yet, a century and a half ago, this was a pioneer route, and its crossing was a test of endurance and fortitude for men and animals. Also, it was the main route used by the horse thieves.

One oldtimer gave the following directions for eastward travel: "Follow the Mojave River to its end, then cut across the desert to the springs (Las Vegas). From there you go to the Colorado River, across the Virgin River, on to the San Juan River and to Santa Fe." This was the old Spanish Trail.

Along this route, Peg Leg Smith and a motley band of mountain men, probably accompanied by some Indians, succeeded with the great horse theft.

A few years later, when Kit Carson was leading a military detachment across the Mojave Desert, he explained the hundreds of horse skeletons littering the trail as those that perished during the horse thievery of earlier years.

After California became a part of the United States, this kind of horse stealing ceased. But one should remember that this was the period of "Manifest Destiny" — westward expansion: Texas colonists fought and won independence from Mexico; also, prior to the Mexican War, the California Territory was considered "up for grabs." Although that was not a reasonable excuse for horse stealing, it was good enough for those men involved at the time.

It should be noted that the Californians pursued the horse thieves and sometimes fought skirmishes with them, but there's no record that any of them were ever caught, shot, or hanged. ●**RW**

REFERENCE SOURCES:

*Old Bill Williams, Mountain Man,* by A. H. Favour, U. of Okla. Press.
*Across The Wide Missouri,* by Bernard DeVoto
*Dear Old Kit,* by H. L. Carter, U. of Oklahoma Press



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By Nono Minor

# THE AMERICAN INDIAN

**Real West facts about the Indian and his way of life. By Nono Minor, Curator of Plains Indians, Kansas City, Museum of History.**

## LITTLE KNOWN INDIANS

In the early history of the United States there were many Indians whose names did not make the history pages, yet they played an important part in helping their own people as well as the early settlers.

Garakonthie, or "Moving Sun," was an Onondaga chief who lived during the 17th century. He secretly helped the French missionaries, then later he openly defended them. He became an advocate of peace and a protector of Christians. He talked his tribe into sending an embassy to Quebec and returning nine French captives, with the hope of establishing peace.

He went with the prisoners to Montreal, where he was not only well received but managed to obtain the release of a number of his own people. He was successful in checking the Onondagas from waging war on the French in 1662, and again he managed to save some French missionaries at Le Moyne. When a later war did take place, he succeeded in protecting the French living in his territory.

Garakonthie became a Christian and was baptized in 1669 in the Cathedral at Quebec, receiving the name of Daniel. He was a humane leader and an orator of great ability. His services were always in demand when an embassy was sent to either the French or English.

Hopehood was a Norridgewock chief known among his own people as Wahowa, or Wohawa. He was the son of a chief called Robinhood. Hopehood took part in the King Phillip's War, and in 1676 he was one of the leaders of the New England tribes who were with the English at Taconnet Main.

In 1685 he joined other sachems in drafting a letter to Governor Cranfield of New Hampshire protesting against the endeavor of the English to get the Mohawks to attack them. Hopehood joined the French under General Hertel on March 18, 1690 in an attack at Salmon falls. Later he went into Iroquois country where some Canadian Indians, believing him to be Iroquois, killed him along with several of his companions.

Moytoy was a Chief of the Cherokee living at Tellico, Tennessee. He became the so called 'emperor' of the seven main Cherokee towns when Sir Alexander Cuming, wishing to get the help of the Cherokee for the British, decided to place in control a chief of his own selection. Sir Alexander chose Moytoy for this and induced the other Indians to accept him as their leader.

Moytoy was then given the title of emperor. The new Emperor and his subjects were urged to pledge themselves on bended knee to be faithful subjects of King George. On April 4, 1730, a crown was brought from Tennessee which contained five eagle tails and four scalps of enemies. This was presented to Sir Alexander, and the Indians asked that this be put at the feet of His Majesty, King George. In later years Moytoy became a bitter enemy of the white man.

Farmer's Brother was a Seneca chief who was known among his people as Honanyawus, a name of vulgar meaning. He was born about 1717 or as late as 1732, according to varying authorities. Farmer's Brother is mentioned in connection with Red Jacket, but he did not come into any known prominence until around 1792.

He was a great orator, and one of his speeches was given before a council at Genessee River, New York in 1798, this after having signed the treaty of Genessee River on September 15, 1797. Farmer's Brother also signed a treaty at Buffalo, New York on June 30, 1802. He was on the side of the United States in the War of 1812, taking part in the action of August 17, 1813.

Soon after the battle of Lundy's Lane, he died and was buried with military honors by the fifth regiment of U.S. infantry. He had always been an advocate of peace and had kept his people from attacking the white man.

Konkaput was a sachem among the Mahican who joined in the sale of the territory comprising the Upper and Lower Housatonic townships. He was given the commission as captain by Governor Belcher in 1734; and in 1744 he became chief of his tribe. Konkaput became a Christian and invited the Moravian missionaries to work among his people, the Westenhuck, who became known as Stockbridge Indians after they were Christianized.

Many of Konkaput's tribe moved to a mission; a few went to join the Christian Indians in Pennsylvania. Konkaput received the Christian name, John, and was recognized by the authorities at Albany and Boston as the head of the Mahican. Previously the tribe had their council fires at Westenhuck, and now John Stockbridge survived as a name as late as 1864. There was a Levi Konkaput who served in the Civil War and who was believed to be a relative of Konkaput.

Killbuck, or Gelelemend "leader", was a Delaware chief born about 1722. He was one of the best educated Indians of his time. On the death of White Eyes in 1778, he was chosen to act as temporary chief of his nation during the choosing of a sachem of the Turtle or Unami clan. Killbuck had won a reputation for fairness. He strove to maintain friendship with the white man and was encouraged in this by the Indian agents and military commandants at Pittsburgh who promised the aid of the United States government to help the Indian.

Killbuck promised peace, but a war party led by Hopocan was also in the council, so Killbuck was invited by the officer commanding the garrison to go along with others of his tribe who wished peace to an island in Allegheny where they could be under the protection of the soldiers. They were not protected, however, from a party of white men who were returning from a massacre of almost 100

*(continued on page 47)*



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# Sensational FEUD BETWEEN TWO CITIES

By Peter M. Panfeld

From the photo collection of Carl Breihon

*Ben Thompson from a photo taken when he was city marshal of Austin, Texas. Thompson was often called "Shotgun Ben" by his contemporaries.*

The small knot of men stood tensely eyeing each other, hands hovering dangerously close to their holstered guns. In the space of time ticked off by the next few minutes, one of the most violent periods in the history of San Antonio would begin, leading to an unprecedented feud with its neighboring city of Austin and barely averting armed warfare between its citizens.

The sounds of gay laughter and music came clearly on the night air, scant hundreds of yards away from the group as they watched and waited for any sudden movement. Nearby, on Military Plaza, a large area had been converted into a festive outdoor restaurant by men and women dressed in Mexican costumes. Each night, as



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the cooling gulf breezes routed the day's heat, they set long planks across wooden horses, covered them with gaily colored tablecloths and placed huge kerosene lamps, candles, cutlery and crockery in place.

Camp stools provided the finishing touch for the arriving travelers, tourists and localities who showed up nightly, some to eat and others to linger among the colorful surroundings. Gracing the scene in their lace mantillas and provocative dresses were the famed "Chili Queens", noted for their vivid beauty as well as for their graceful bearing. Effortlessly, they wended their way among the tables, placing a dish of chili con carne here, a plate of hot tamales there, all done with vivacious smiles and lively quips while the strains of old Mexican polkas and ballads alternated on the night air from guitar - strumming caballeros strolling on the outer edges of the dining area.

The volume of sound grew as the night wore on, while the "Chili Queens" made their repeated trips from great, pungently steaming kettles to the crowded tables, pausing occasionally to smile at a newcomer or to banter laughingly with a favorite patron.

But on this night of July 11, 1882, if the men standing on the northwest corner of Main Plaza and Soledad Street were aware of the nearby gaiety or of the sounds coming from the collection of saloons, gambling and variety houses that lined the immediate area, they gave no sign of it. In low tones, they pleaded with one man, who was dressed in dapper clothing in the latest style, to leave with them. His attention, however, was riveted on the entrance to the Vaudeville Theater, a combination saloon, variety and gambling emporium owned by Jack Harris, one of the leading lights of San Antonio's sporting world.

Suddenly the dapper man moved forward, almost in front of the fibre swinging doors.

"Harris, you dirty coward," he yelled, "This is Ben Thompson — where are you?"

With muttered oaths, the other men turned quickly away and disappeared into the darkness, leaving Thompson, a lean, handsome man and considered one of the coldest and deadliest killers in the west, standing alone.

"Harris," he taunted, "where's that thieving dealer of yours, Joe Foster? I'll take on both of you!"

The door before which Thompson stood pointing and cursing was constructed in two sections of slats of wood; the slats in the upper part were closed, but those in the lower half of the door were open so that, by stooping down, Thompson could see Harris crouched and partly hidden by the box office doorway leading into the variety theater. Nursing the muzzle of his shotgun with his left wrist which had been crippled long before. Harris' right hand was pointing the shotgun in Thompson's general direction, trying to draw an accurate bead on the man outside his range of vision.

"What do you think you're going to do with that shotgun, you ..." Thompson shouted, adding a string of foul words to the question.

Wheeling toward the sound of Thompson's voice, Harris said, "I'm going to—" But the sentence was never finished, for with one complete movement Thompson drew his silver mounted Colt .45 and fired, the bullet finding its mark in Harris' chest.

Thompson's gun sounded again as Harris staggered away toward a nearby staircase leading up to the balcony. The second shot tore into Harris' neck above the collarbone. As Thompson holstered his gun and moved quickly away from the scene before reinforcements could arrive, Harris managed to grope his way up the stairs where he fell, conscious but mortally wounded.

Recently discovered documents in the San Antonio courthouse archives make it possible to pinpoint the succeeding events in almost precise detail.

Keeping well away from the crowded streets, Thompson walked in an easterly direction. According to a later statement made by G. Horner, owner of a saloon, "From my back yard an alleyway leads to Market street. I know the Braden hotel. It is on the north side of Market street in this city. The Braden hotel is about 100 yards east of the alley that leads from my saloon to Market street.

"Thompson came in the front door of my saloon and went out the back door — this was about 10 or 15 minutes after the shooting". On cross - examination Horner added that Thompson "called for a drink and asked me to drink with him". Thompson also declared his intention of surrendering only to City Marshal Phil Shardein, said Horner.

The reference to the Braden hotel was occasioned by the fact that when Thompson left through the back door of Horner's saloon his next stop was the Braden hotel where, according to testimony given by owner C.J. Beck, "he unloaded and reloaded his revolver. He told me that his name was Ben Thompson and that he was City Marshal of Austin. It was a nickel plated pistol and I did not know the make. Don't know how many shells he took out of his pistol — think he took them with him ... Thompson came to my house afoot — it was about 8 o'clock at night — he left my house afoot."

From the Braden hotel, Thompson made no further stops until he reached his lodgings in the Menger hotel where he spent the night. The reputation of the man was such that he was permitted to leave the scene of the shooting, pause for refreshment, and walk leisurely back to his hotel without anyone attempting to hold him for the authorities.

Meanwhile, Harris had been removed on a litter to his home where he was attended by Dr. Thomas R. Chew who later testified "the ball struck the breastbone and passed between the 4th and 5th rib and passed out behind. Jack Harris died from the effect of a gunshot wound." The doctor also declared, "Harris remarked to me about 30 minutes before he died, 'He took advantage of me and shot me from the dark'. Harris was looking at me when he made this remark ... the remark was caused by those around him discussing the shooting. The room was full of people who were talking about the shooting, and Ben Thompson's name was called and Harris made the remark".

Sheriff T.P. McCall in later testimony gave indirect insight on the times when he stated: "On the morning after the killing of Harris, Thompson sent for me and Capt. (also City Marshal) Shardein to come to the Menger hotel, that he wished to deliver himself to us. We went and Thompson gave himself up to us."

The laconic report of the sheriff was not to be construed as either weakness or fear because San Antonio during that period was the stomping grounds of some of the best known guns of the west. But the records show that while in San Antonio they drank, gambled, occasionally shot out some of the street lights in their exuberance, but only rarely did they resort to violence because they knew more guns could be mustered against them in short order than they could handle.

Thompson was the exception rather than the rule in San Antonio. There were, of course, fights resulting from the heat of anger during a gambling session or a dancehall brawl, but these were quelled by the policeman on the beat and, until now, had never involved anyone of prominence.



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**State of Texas,**
*COUNTY OF BEXAR.*

BEFORE THE UNDERSIGNED PERSONALLY CAME AND APPEARED, M Stow who is known to me as a resident of the County of Bexar aforesaid and a credible person, who, being duly sworn, deposes and says that a trial alike fair and impartial to the accused Ben. Thompson and the State of Texas, cannot be had in the County of Bexar, in the case therein pending in the District Court in said county, wherein the State of Texas is plaintiff, and Ben. Thompson aforesaid is defendant in an indictment charging the said Thompson with the murder of Jack Harris.

That affiant is acquainted with the state of feeling that exists in the said county with reference to the said Ben. Thompson, and he says that there exists in Bexar County so great a prejudice against him that he cannot obtain a fair and impartial trial.

And he says further, that there exists a dangerous combination against said Ben. Thompson in reference to said charge, instigated by influential persons in said county, by reason of which he cannot expect a fair trial.

M Stow

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 23rd day of December 1882. In witness whereof I hereto set my hand and seal of office.

W W Heard

Notary Public, Bexar County, Texas.

From the photo collection of Carl Breihan

*Copy of deposition entered in the trial of Ben Thompson for the killing of Jack Harris. This is the first time an exact duplicate of this deposition has been published.*

Placed in jail and charged with murder, Ben Thompson who, despite his reputation as a dangerous killer, had managed to become City Marshal of Austin, sent in his resignation along with a plea for help to his friends there.

In Austin, some 75 miles north of San Antonio, a strange fever set in. Newspapers headlined that Marshal Ben Thompson had done San Antonio a great favor by ridding the city of an evil man, that Ben Thompson should be released forthwith and should be treated as a hero. Long columns were written telling how the feud, culminating in the shooting of Harris, was the result of a faro game where, according to Thompson, he had been cheated by a Harris dealer named Joe Foster out of some diamond jewelry.

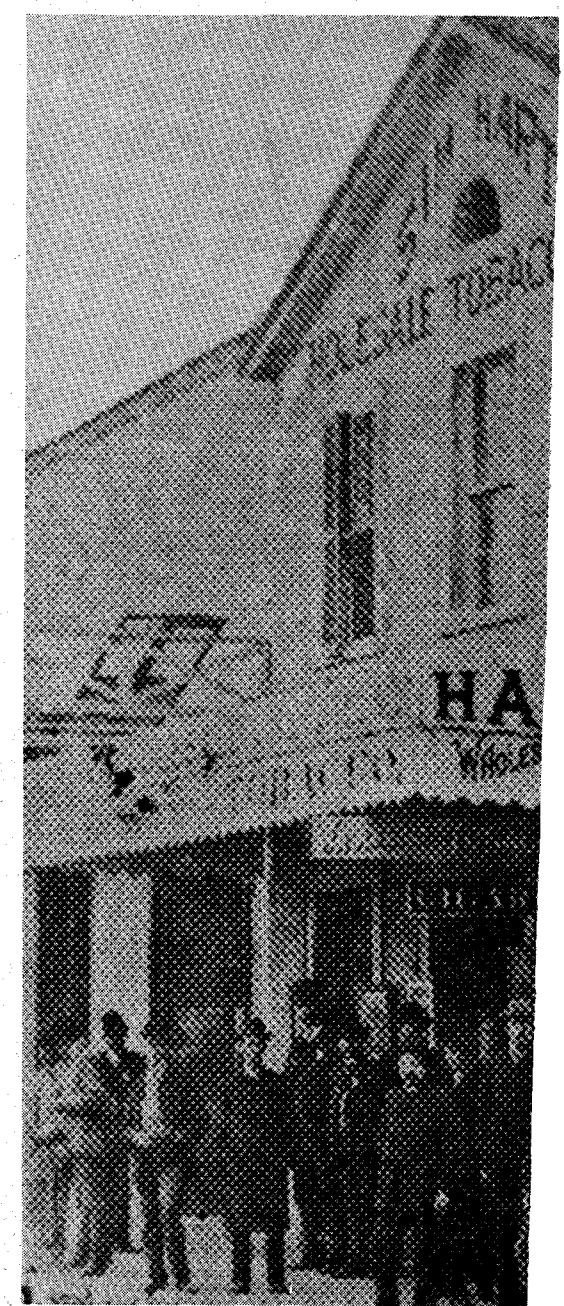
San Antonio, a far more sophisticated city, bristled at Austin's attitude and responded by questioning Austin's good sense in electing of man of Thompson's reputation to the office of City Marshal. The charges, one against the other, continued to grow in heat until it appeared for a time as though citizens of the two cities would engage in a pitched battle.

Meanwhile, the legal effort to free Ben Thompson waged for six months while he was held in jail without any bond being granted. The plea for a writ of change of venue was also turned down, despite the fact that the defense attorneys used a tactic which had never before been employed and which has never been resorted to since that case. In their attempt to prove that an impartial trial would be an impossibility in San Antonio, they had legal depositions printed, seven inches by eight inches in size.

More than thirty of them were entered into evidence, with many more available if needed, but their efforts in this direction proved fruitless. No change of venue was granted. Finally, when tempers had cooled considerably, trial was set in San Antonio for the last week of January, 1883. It began on a Tuesday, and the jury brought in its verdict of "Not Guilty" on Sunday morning.

Ben Thompson took the evening train back to Austin, and the scene that met him when he descended onto the platform was one of sheer delirium. Cheering crowds split the air with rebel yells; public officials, businessmen, the sporting fraternity, cold-eyed gunmen, all were there in a festive mood. The carriage waiting for him was bedecked with flowers, but the horses had been unharnessed.

Instead, men vied with each other



From the photo collection of Carl Breihan



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for the honor of pulling the vehicle. The carriage moved along Congress Avenue greeted by cheering crowds lining both sides of the wide street. Pausing at City Hall, Thompson was again appointed City Marshal, and then the parade continued on to his home where, after a good deal of celebration, it finally came to an end.

But the people of Austin were about to be subjected to a rude awakening, and that without any lapse of time. The City Marshal began a spree of hard drinking and promiscuous terrorizing, resulting in the same editorial pages which had defended him in such fiery fashion now waxing equally emotional in their demand for law and order — and that someone curb the antics of the City Marshal. Thompson's response was to shoot out the lights at the Austin *Statesman* and, according to chroniclers, dump the type of some forms.

This situation continued until March 11, 1884, when a dramatic turn of events brought Ben Thompson back to San Antonio and back to the Vaudeville, where a party far more grim than he ever anticipated, awaited him. It began when John King Fisher, deputy sheriff of Uvalde County west of San Antonio and candidate for sheriff, happened to visit Austin on some business.

A handsome, friendly man with a host of friends including Thompson, Fisher stopped in to see the City marshal on March 11th, and the two, after spending some time brightened by the presence of a bottle, eventually decided to continue their partying. Within minutes after Thompson and Fisher boarded the train a telegram was dispatched to San Antonio saying in effect that trouble was on its way. As a result, from the time they left the railroad station, detectives alternated in dogging their footsteps and reporting their activities to police

*The Vaudeville theater in San Antonio, Texas. Here, on March 11, 1884, John King Fisher and Ben Thompson were killed in a gun fight. Some claimed they were ambushed and assassinated.*



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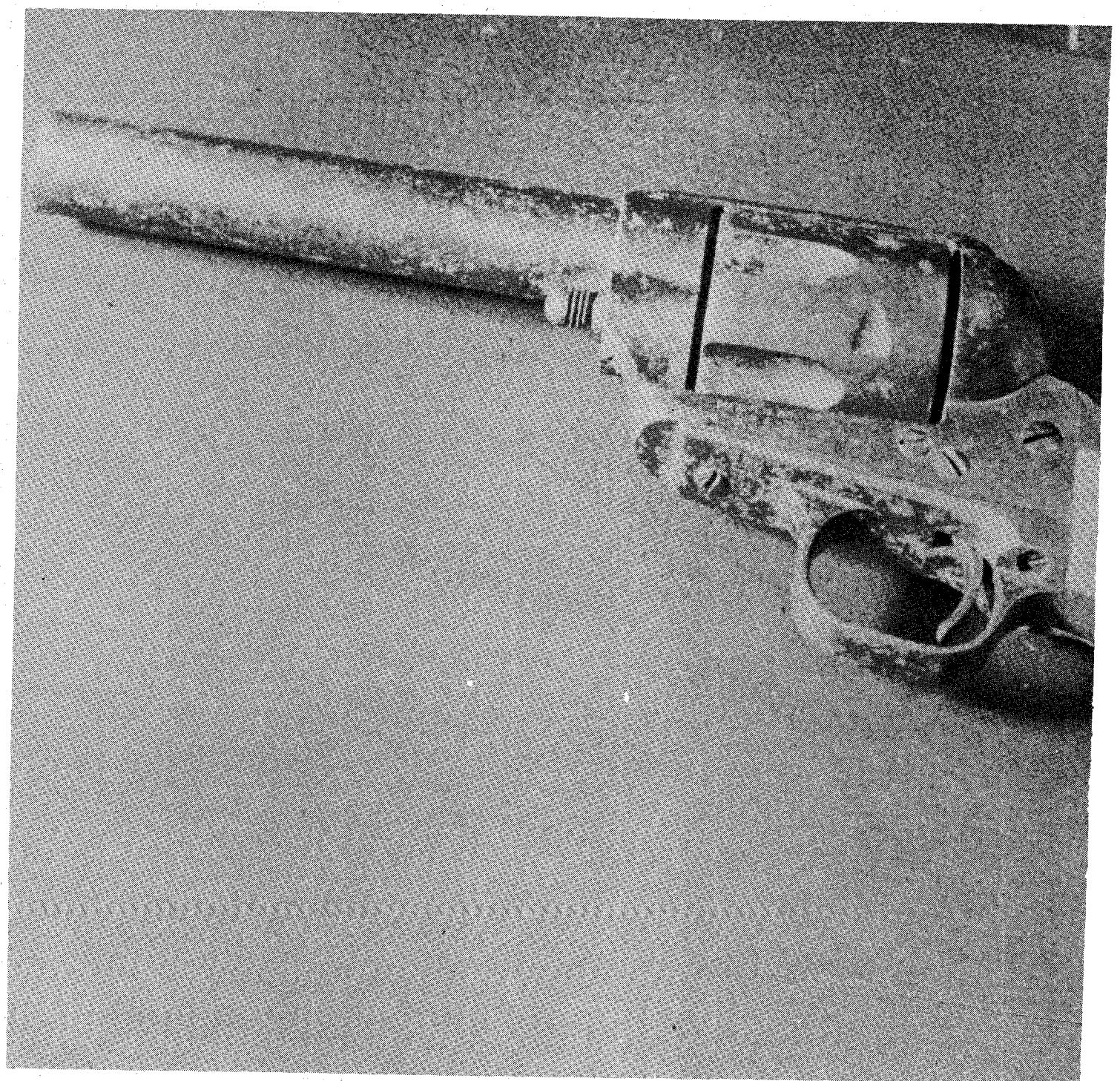

From the photo collection of Carl Breihan

*Ben Thompson's famous revolver, a .45 colt.*

headquarters.

After attending a performance of "Lady Audley's Secret" at the Turner Hall Opera House on Houston Street, marked by frequent visits to the bar during the show, the pair sauntered south to Commerce Street and then turned west where, two blocks away, stood the Vaudeville. Pausing to refresh themselves in several of the saloons which lined the way, Thompson and Fisher eventually arrived at and entered the Vaudeville where they were met by John Dyer, the same bartender who had been on duty twenty months before when Harris had been gunned down. And while Thompson's smile of recognition was taunting, Dyer's was obviously nervous and strained.

Billy Simms, erstwhile close associate of the late Jack Harris, who had formed a partnership with Joe Foster following Harris' demise to take over the ownership of the place, joined the men at the bar. Simms was originally from Austin and knew both Thompson and Fisher; he now tried lightly, but with an undercurrent of desperation, to persuade the two to join him for "a night across the creek", the slang expression for the red light district sprawling west of the Plaza. But the men refused, and Simms finally yielded to Thompson's insistence on "seeing the show from the balcony" and led the way upstairs.

Constructed in the conventional manner of variety theaters of the era, the lower part of the auditorium was on the same level with the bar; the orchestra area was lined with folding chairs cleated to movable planks. At the conclusion



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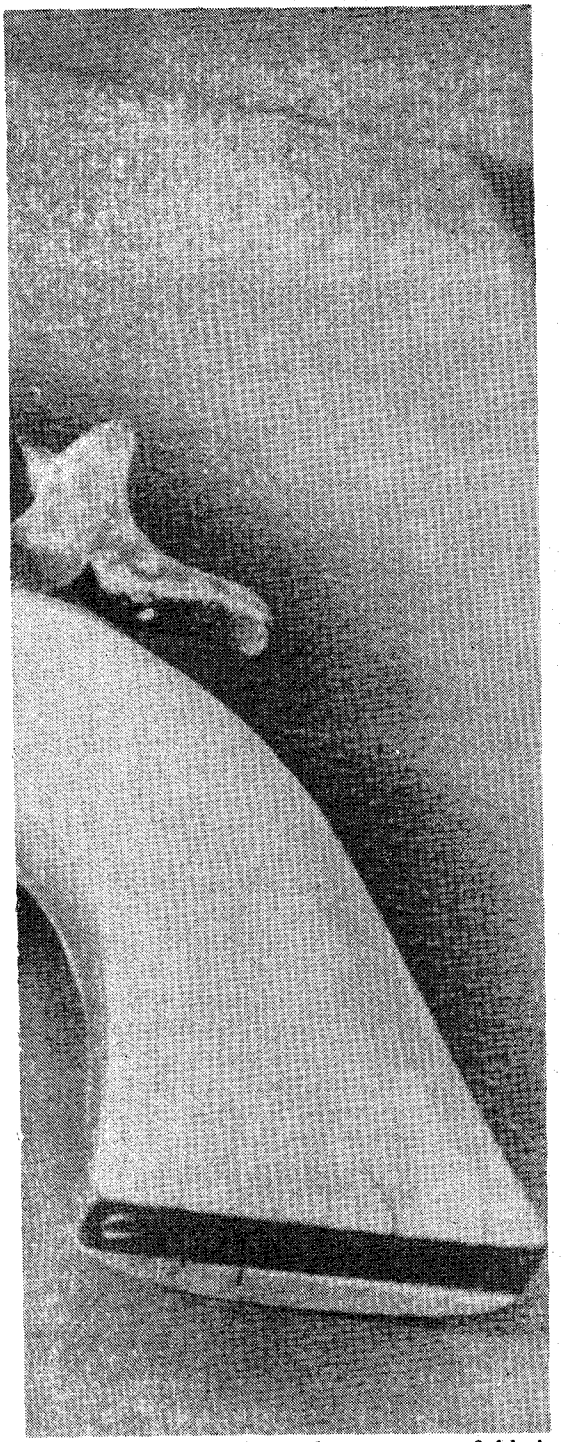

of each show, the seats were folded and the planks stacked on each side of the hall, leaving a clear area for dancing.

On the upper level, reached by the stairway from the bar and stretching on either side, in addition to the balcony seats was a row of boxes, each equipped with adjustable curtains for obvious reasons. Heavy spenders were cajoled by their feminine companions into the boxes to interest themselves in pursuits other than watching the show, behind the all - concealing draperies. But on the night of March 11th and with the hour close to midnight, it has been recorded that not a single woman occupied any of the boxes.

City Detective Jacobo Coy, on extra duty as a special officer, joined the party as they entered the balcony and were seated by solicitous waiters who almost immediately served whiskey to Thompson and Fisher. Finally, with the tension becoming almost unbearable, Simms sighed with relief when Thompson agreed to go for a "run across the creek"; the party rose and moved toward the staircase leading downstairs. But, according to later testimony, Thompson suddenly halted.

"First I want to see Joe Foster," he declared.

Simms was right at the breaking point.

"Ben, you know Joe doesn't want to talk to you. Please, let's go now before there's any trouble."

But Thompson was adamant. "I'm not leaving until I talk to Joe." Then, suddenly spying Foster near the front row of the balcony, Thompson called, "Hello, Joe!"

Foster turned and, recognizing Thompson, slowly got up and made his way toward him, adjusting his thick - lensed glasses as he peered at him. Foster had testified against Thompson at the inquest and at the trial, and now he walked toward him with reluctance.

If any of the men had bothered to look around, he would have noticed that where formerly the balcony had been crowded, now suddenly they were alone in a cleared area. He would have noticed, too, that the

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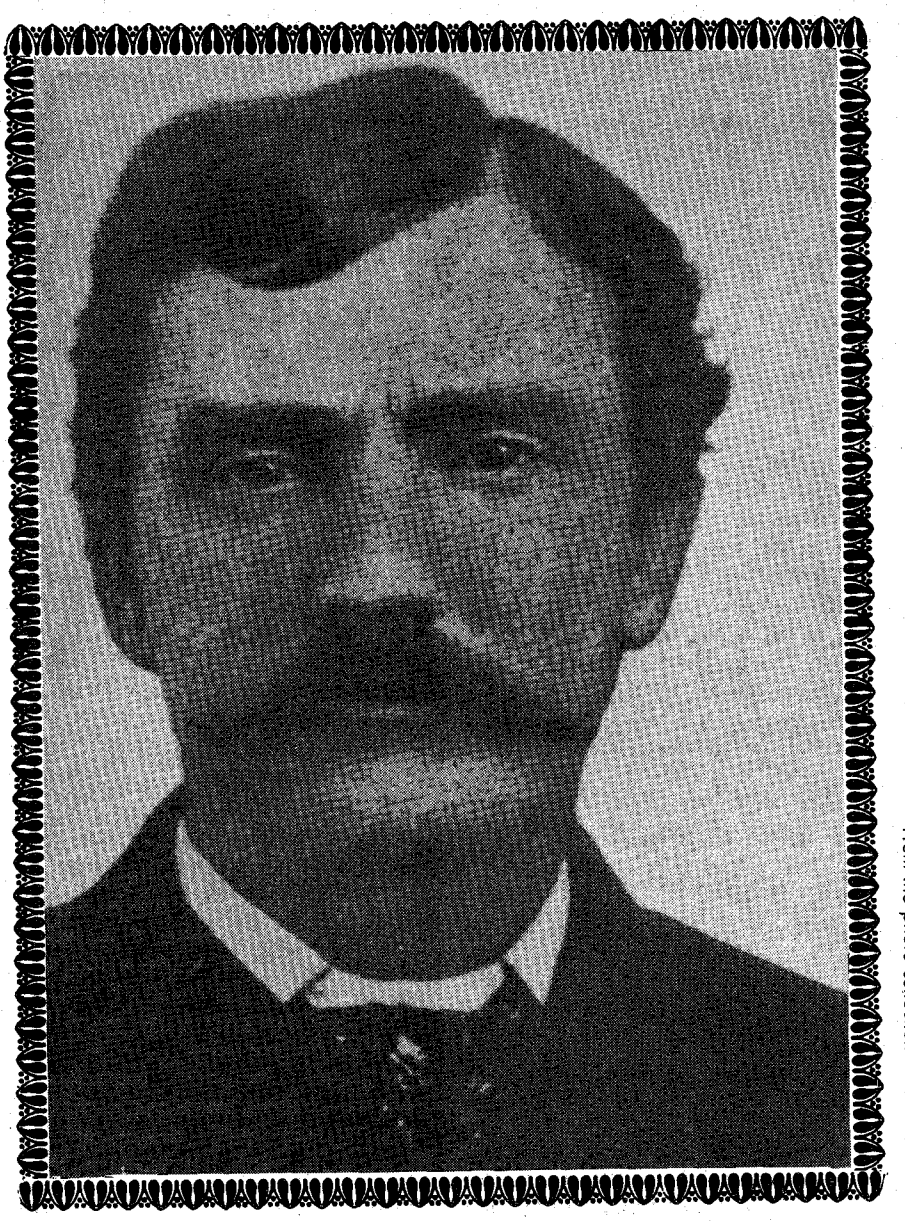

*John King Fisher as he appeared when he was deputy sheriff of Uvalde County, Texas.*

From the photo collection of Carl Breihan



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# DID CUSTER REALLY

**At 23, George Armstrong Custer became the youngest general in the history of the United States Army. He was one of the most daring, original, and controversial figures in American history. He was a famed Indian fighter, yet he wrote admiring articles about the courage and fighting ability of the enemy. He argued against the Army policy of extermination but carried out his orders until the tragic end.**

Western History Department Denver Public Library

*General George Armstrong Custer.*

"If I were an Indian, I often think I would greatly prefer to cast my lot among those of my people who adhered to the free open plains rather than submit to the confined limits of a reservation, there to be the recipient of the blessed benefits of civilization, with its vices thrown in without stint or measure."

Surely this quote, from a book published in 1874, must have been uttered by an unusually clear-eyed 19th Century statesman, one who understood the "Indian problem" and fearlessly championed the Indian cause. It was a very unpopular thing to do in those turbulent times, and all the fair-minded students of Indian history must revere this individual for his heroic efforts.

But as it turned out, such statements from his book, My Life On the Plains, did not win permanent laurels from anybody for George Armstrong Custer. As the commander of a doomed battalion, wiped out by Plains Indians at the Little Big Horn in 1876, Custer has come to represent both the bullying cavalry commander, mercilessly hunting down helpless savages, and the hapless loser in the last great victory the Indians ever recorded against the horde of intruders who overwhelmed their way of life and took away their land.

In fact, both images are somewhat out of focus. In his brief but exciting lifetime, Custer proved himself one of the most daring, original, and controversial of characters; in death, his career has been almost hopelessly clouded by emotionalism, and his story is filled with strange ironies. Just the name of Custer is still enough to start a very warm



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# HAVE IT COMING?

By Stephanie Cooper Shulsinger

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*"The Custer Clan". General Custer is standing in center with buckskin jacket and light hat. Mrs. Custer sits in front of him with dark hat. Custer's sister, Margaret is in front of Mrs. Custer. Lt. James Calhoun is on extreme left. Seated on ground next to him is Boston Custer.*

discussion, indicating that the Boy General, who has been dead for nearly a century, is still an exceedingly lively ghost.

It is a fact that Custer, who had racked up an incredibly impressive Civil War record that made him the youngest general in American history at age 23, did indeed fight Indians. It was the business of the army to do that after the great War had ended, and the nation had resumed its relentless push westward to the Pacific. A career army man was lucky to get a command at all when post-war forces inevitably were drastically reduced, and there were many officers senior to Custer who would gladly have traded with him when he was appointed a lieutenant-colonel with the Seventh Cavalry. Some of them were good-natured about their envy, while others were not. After all, who was Custer that he should deserve such preferential treatment?

He was a blacksmith's son from Ohio, a lithe, muscular, but slender figure of a man, about five feet nine inches in height, with a mop of copper-colored curls and a pair of extremely compelling, deep-set blue eyes. His whole organism was one of dash and flair, and with a keen sense of the dramatic, "Autie" Custer commanded attention wherever he went.

An incurable practical joker, a superb horseman and an indifferent scholar, he had left a less than brilliant record behind him at West Point, graduating at the bottom of his class in the fateful spring of 1861. From there he went directly into combat where he scored again and again as a fearless cavalryman and later commander, actively participating in nearly every battle of the Army of the Potomac, including those resulting in the death of the great Jeb Stuart and the surrender of General Lee.

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*Rain-in-the-Face, one of the Indian leaders at the battle of the Little Big Horn.*



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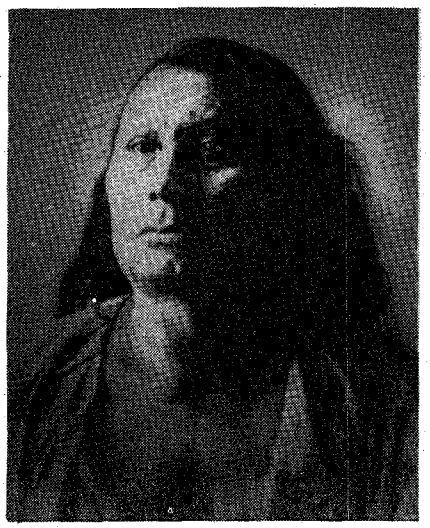

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*Chief Gall, another Indian leader present at the Custer defeat.*

Dressed in fantastic costumes, composed largely of parts of captured confederate uniforms, the colorful Custer became famous for his daring charges which he always led personally, carrying a sword on which was inscribed in Spanish, "Draw me not without cause; sheathe me not without honor." His long hair, grown on a bet that he wouldn't cut it until the end of the War, fitted right in with his generally flamboyant appearance, and the sight of Custer, with a laughing challenge to his men, waving his big hat and yelling "Charge!" in a shrill midwestern twang, was a natural attraction for visiting newsmen.

Custer's easy charm and rather gaudy reputation, which made him a favorite with both men and women, earned him considerable publicity. So when he married the prettiest girl in Monroe, Michigan, he and his bride seemed likely to ride off into a very rosy sunset. As yet no one could see the storms brewing on the western horizon.

It didn't take long for Custer to learn tactics of Indian warfare. He made mistakes, but he had a peculiar advantage, as there was something within himself that was in sympathy with the red men. He wrote:

"In studying the Indian character, while shocked and disgusted by many of his traits and customs, I find much to be admired and still more of deep and unvarying interest."

Custer began using the music of the regimental band as a psychological weapon, much as the Indians used their piercing war whoop. Soon he was wearing buckskins and collecting souvenirs taken in battle and traded for: from arrowheads to beaded moccasins, once even a whole tent, made of buffalo hide and beautifully painted with battle scenes. He liked the challenge of learning to defeat these incomparable horsemen of the plains at their own game in their home territory, and they admired him for the qualities Henry Schoolcraft had described long before as most esteemed by Indians: "sagacity, cunning, perseverance, and heroic courage."

But unfortunately, the situation in the West was not simply a matter of victory or defeat. Political influence was a serious factor, and when it became known that Indian agencies were being sold to the highest bidder, the matter was of great embarrassment to the Grant administration. However, Custer jumped characteristically into the controversy with both feet, writing for several newspapers and for the Galaxy, a popular periodical. He minced no words:

"Who ever heard of a retired Indian agent in limited circumstances? How do they realize fortune upon so small a salary? In the disposition of the annuities provided for the Indians by the government, the agent is usually the distributing medium. Between himself and the Indian there is no system of accountability, no vouchers are given or received, no books kept, in fact no record except the statement which the agent chooses to forward to his superintendent.

"The Indian has no means of knowing how much in value or how many presents of any particular kind, the government, the 'Great Father' as he terms it, has sent him. For knowledge on this point he must accept the statement of the agent ... If the agent, instead of distributing to the Indians all of the goods intended for them by the government, only distributes one half and retains the other half, who is to be the wiser? Not the Indian, defrauded though he may be, for he is ignorant of how much is coming to him. The word of the agent is his only guide.

He may complain a little, express some disappointment at the limited amount of presents, and intimate that the 'Great Father' has dealt out the annuities with a sparing hand; but the agent explains it by referring to some depradation which he knows the tribe to have been guilty of in times past, or if he is not aware of any particular instance of guilt, he charges them generally with having committed such acts, knowing one can scarcely go amiss in accusing a tribe of occasionally slaying a white man, and ends up his charge by informing them that the 'Great Father,' learning of these little irregularities in their conduct and being pained greatly thereat, felt compelled to reduce their allowance of blankets, sugar, coffee, etc., when at the same time the missing portion of said allowance is safely secured in the storehouse of the agent near by.

Well, but how can he enrich himself in this manner? It may be asked. By simply, and unseen by the Indians, transferring the unissued portion of the annuities from his government storehouse to the trading storehouse of his friend the trader. There the boxes are unpacked and their contents spread out for barter with the Indians.

The latter, in gratifying their wants, are forced to purchase from the trader at prices which are scores of times the value of the article offered. I have seen Indians dispose of buffalo robes to traders, which were worth from fifteen to twenty dollars each, and get in return only ten to twenty cups of brown sugar, the entire value of which did not exceed two or three dollars. This is one of the many ways agents and traders have of amassing sudden wealth."

It isn't surprising that such outspoken remarks brought Custer a lot of trouble in powerful circles. Still, he continued to say and write what he thought, letting the proverbial chips fall where they may. He insisted that the Indian Bureau should be transferred from the civilian hands in the Department of the Interior back to the War Department, where it had been until 1849. Custer was echoed in this recommendation by most of the people who lived on the frontier, by other military leaders, and even by many Indians, such as Eli Parker, chief of the Six Nations, who said:

"I know of no reason why officers of the army could not make all these payments as well as civilians. The expenses of agencies would be saved, and I think the Indians would be more honestly dealt by ..."

General John Pope agreed, but he put it more bluntly:

"The military are necessary—the civil officers are not."

Not content with mixing it with powerful political interests, to whom patronage was highly profitable, Custer frankly assessed the "Indian problem" and stepped on a few toes in recommending a solution. He believed that he understood the view of the Indians toward the encroachment of an alien civilization,



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and he insisted that only force, or a show of force with the willingness to use it, would ever convince a single Indian of the need to change his traditional way of life and be absorbed into the American economy. Of this Custer wrote:

"To assume that he (the Indian) can be guided by appeals to his ideas or moral right and wrong, independent of threatening or final compulsion, is to place him far above his more civilized brothers of the white race, who, in the most advanced stage of refinement and morality, still find it necessary to employ force, sometimes to resort to war, to exact justice from a neighboring nation."

Custer was disgusted by interfering busybodies who had never seen an Indian unless he was paraded through the halls of Washington, but who talked treaties and distributed gifts, "the rule of distribution, I believe, being as usual that the worst Indians received the greatest number of valuable presents," and he expressed his contempt for the false promises that such people extracted from both sides. Generally, he said, this sort of council had always had one result:

"The lion and the lamb had agreed to lie down together, but the sequel proved that when they got up again the lamb was missing."

Custer, however, deplored the notion that the only answer was to kill off all the Indians. He vehemently opposed this tragically radical approach, which was considered the only solution by some, and it is one of the saddest ironies of his career that wars aimed at annihilation are exactly what resulted from the public hysteria that followed the news of his death.

So much for the charges against "Custer the Indian-hater," which are currently in vogue among Hollywood screen writers. Such charges are not documented, so they cannot be taken seriously in view of Custer's own words published in articles and book form years before his passing. He was a soldier, but he was not a butcher, and he was clear-headed enough to resent the Indians being used as a political football at a time when most people were indifferent or downright hostile to the idea of Indians having rights. Commenting bitingly on the refusal of Congress to take any action to stop the defrauding of reservation Indians, Custer wrote:

"It seems almost incredible that a policy which is claimed and represented to be based on sympathy for the red man and a desire to secure him his rights, is shaped in reality and manipulated behind the scenes with the government and the Indians ... The ways of Congress are sometimes peculiar — not to employ a more expressive term."

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*Indian and white man holding peace pipe to signify everlasting peace between the races.*

Such comments may not have made Custer many friends in Washington, but neither did they establish him as an implacable foe of Indian rights.

It is interesting to note recent accusations that Custer took a captured squaw and fathered her child. As the story goes, the girl was Monasetah, the daughter of Little Rock, a Cheyenne chief who was killed at the Battle of the Washita in which Custer was the victorious commander. The speculation arose from Custer's almost poetic description of her in his writings, as " ... an exceedingly comely squaw, possessing a bright, cheery face, a countenance beaming with intelligence, and a disposition more inclined to be merry than one usually finds among the Indians. She was probably rather under than over twenty years of age.

Added to bright, laughing eyes, a set of pearly teeth, and a rich complexion, her well-shaped head was crowned with a luxuriant growth of the most beautiful silken tresses, rivalling in color the blackness of the raven and extending, when allowed to fall loosely over her shoulders, to below her waist."

Monasetah had been married to a Cheyenne warrior and was divorced from him by Indian law after a quarrel in which she crippled him for life. She was pregnant when captured and had a child two months afterward. That she adored Custer is undoubted, as later she willingly led him into an encampment of her people and smoothed the way for him in an important parley. Under Cheyenne law it would have been perfectly fine for Custer to marry her, although he already had a wife. Besides, it would certainly have been a feather in Monasetah's bonnet to capture the affections of the handsome white chief who thought and fought so much like an Indian.

On Custer's part, however, there is little likelihood that there was anything but admiration. Although he had been a little wild as a young fellow, Custer was now very happily married to the beautiful, brilliant, and spirited young Libbie Bacon Custer, who eagerly followed him to every post she was allowed to visit. Besides, with so many personal enemies as he had in his own camp, as well as his brother Tom who worshipped Libbie, it is unlikely that Custer would have indulged in relations with Monasetah, even had he been so inclined.

It is a telling point that Frederic Van de Water, writing in 1934 in his book *Glory-Hunter,* described Custer as "dangerously insubordinate," "a brutal commander," "distrusted," "scorned," etc., but he did not even suggest a hint of gossip on this subject, although Monasetah was mentioned by name.

In short, there is little to support the view that Monasetah meant any more to Custer than the countless other feminine admirers who fell for the dashing cavalry commander who had plenty of charisma. He was vain, and he enjoyed the company and attentions of pretty women all his life,



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*Sitting Bull's comments about Custer in later life were simply, "He was a great warrior."*

even insisting that Libble invite young unmarried girl friends to be their guests at frontier posts and showing off in front of them like a boy. However, there is absolutely no evidence of infidelity in the twelve years the Custers were married. Both the General and his lady were very attractive young people, and they enjoyed teasing each other in their letters about their little flirtations and conquests.

Toward the end of Custer's life, he became directly involved in the controversy which ended the political career of Secretary of War William Belknap, who admitted selling Indian agencies and later resigned under fire. Called before several congressional committees to testify against Belknap in this tired old scandal, Custer answered with his usual reckless frankness. Asked if he had ever raised the subject of traders' abuses before the Secretary of War, he replied:

"No, sir. Because I was as suspicious of the Secretary as of the trader."

His stand during the hearings earned Custer the permanent enmity of President Grant, and it almost ended his military career. As it turned out, it was ended anyway in his next battle, thanks to wildly erroneous army intelligence reports which greatly underestimated the size and strength of the opposing Indians.

Custer's part of the Battle of the Little Big Horn was over in only about thirty minutes, but with each passing year, its appeal and fascination seem to grow. The Indians certainly haven't forgotten, for every June 25th, representatives of the Cheyenne, Sioux, and other tribes that participated in that famous encounter gather at its site to celebrate the memory of their last great victory.

Their ancestors did not know that Custer was on the battlefield and among the casualties until long afterward, when the Indians had fled from the scene before the pursuing army. If their descendants of today can find consolation in recalling this disaster to mind, Custer would probably have been the last to begrudge it. He wrote:

"At best the history of our Indian tribes, no matter from what standpoint it is regarded, affords a melancholy picture of loss of life ... Where and why have they (the Indians) gone? Ask the Saxon race, since whose introduction into and occupation of the country these vast changes have been effected."

Custer understood the bitterness of the Indians' plight and observed the queer twists of fate with surprising keenness. He actually seems to have written this passage about his own bizarre career:

"Provided with but few comforts, necessarily limited in this respect by the amount of transportation, which on the Plains is narrowed down to the smallest practicable, the soldier bids adieu—often a final one—to the dear ones of home, and with his comrades in arms sets out, no matter how inclement the season, to seek what, fame and glory? How many military men have reaped laurels from their Indian campaigns? Does he strive to win the approving smile of his countrymen?

That is indeed, in this particular instance, a difficult task. For let him act as he may in conducting or assisting in a campaign against the Indians, if he survives the campaign he can feel assured of this fact, that one half of his fellow-citizens at home will revile him for his zeal and pronounce his success, if he achieves any, a massacre of poor, defenseless, harmless Indians, while the other half, if his efforts to chastise the common enemy are not crowned with satisfactory results, will cry, 'Down with him. Down with the regular army, and give us brave volunteers who can serve the government in other ways besides eating rations and drawing pay!' "

After Custer's death, the outcry for vengeance resulted in some curious happenings. Custer's friends accused Grant of deliberately sending him to his death, while his enemies insisted that the dead commander had blundered foolishly into a trap. Both charges were unreasonable, as Custer had personally pleaded with Grant to be allowed to return to his regiment from the hearings in Washington, and false intelligence reports had been the basis for Custer's presence on the Little Big Horn with an insufficient force.

Nevertheless, in that election year, Custer's more emotional admirers insisted that a vote for Grant's candidate (Hayes) was a vote for Custer's murderer. The exceedingly close Hayes-Tilden election wound up in the House of Representatives where it was decided strictly along party lines, so Custer might have been a factor in that turbulent election.

The old subject of the Indian Bureau came up again and stirred some oratory, but support for its return to the War Department was splintered, so the issue died. The "Indian problem" remained with the Department of the Interior, where it is today, along with the care of national shrines, including (with a fine bit of irony) the Custer Battlefield National Monument.

In the century that has passed since his death during our centennial summer, Custer has probably been more actively loved and hated than any other man in history, except perhaps Napoleon, whose military genius he much admired and was deeply studying when his last campaign began. Of course, the Indians who opposed him had their own opinions.

One of the greatest of these, Sitting Bull, the medicine chief of the Hunkpapa Sioux, was in camp that day on the Little Big Horn. He had quite a few remarks to make about the battle in later years, but of Custer he always said, simply and with respect, "He was a great warrior."

Did Custer really have it coming, or has his image been blurred by those who seek sensationalism and remember only his final defeat? Can it be that this man, who is said to symbolize the humiliation and des-



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truction of the Indian way of life, was one of the best friends the Indians ever had?

As incredible as it seems, it is even possible that, in an effort to fix the blame on someone for the many real injustices their people have suffered for centuries, the Indians themselves have been unfair in their estimate of a gallant foe, who was also their eloquent advocate in the councils of the enemy. ●RW

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**THE AMERICAN INDIAN**

*(continued from page 35)*

Christian Delawares at Gnadenhuetten in 1782. They attacked Killbuck and his people.

The young chief of the tribe was killed along with several others. Killbuck escaped, and later his services were of value in bringing about peace; but the Munsee held him responsible for what had happened to the Delawares, and to escape their vengeance, he remained with his family at Pittsburgh and later joined the Moravian Indians. Living under their protection, he was given the name, William Henry, after being baptized. He died in January 1811.

Buckongahelas, or "Breaker in Pieces," was a Delaware chief born during the first half of the 18th century. He was the son of Wewandochwalend, a chief of a band of Delawares living in Ohio. However, Buckongahelas became chief when the Delawares were living on the Miami and White Rivers. He took part with the English against the Colonist but was never cruel to his captives.

It was said that he was a great and noble warrior and took no delight in killing. At the battle of Presque Isle, Ohio in 1794, he became so disgusted with the conduct of the English that he turned his sympathies to the United States. He was present when the treaty of 1785 was signed at Fort McIntosh, where Beaver, Pa. is now located, but his name does not appear on the treaty. His name is on a treaty signed August 3, 1795 at Greenville, Ohio and again at Fort Wayne, Indiana on June 7, 1803. Soon after signing a treaty at Vincennes, Indiana on August 18, 1804, he died.

Black Bob was a chief of the Shawnee, his band originally being part of the Hathawekela division which became separated from the rest of the tribe around 1826. They were then living in Eastern Missouri, near Cape Girardeau, on land which had been granted to them by Baron Carondelet in 1793. This was, at that time, Spanish territory. In 1854 Black Bob signed a treaty, and his tribe was moved to Kansas and given rights on the Shawnee reservation. Later, under Black Bob's leadership the tribe refused to move to Indian territory in 1868.

Enmegahbowh, or "The One Who Stands Before His People," was an Ottawa by birth, but when very young, he was adopted by the Chippewa and converted to the Methodist faith. He was educated at the Methodist mission school at Jacksonville, Ill. and ordained as a preacher and given the name Rev. John Johnson. He accompanied Elder T. B. Kavanaugh to the Upper Mississippi in 1839, where he became a missionary among the Chippewa for five years. Later, when the Methodist church withdrew around 1852, Rev. Johnson asked the Episcopal church to send a minister into this section. A school and a mission were established at Gull lake, Minn., and Rev. Johnson served as assistant and interpreter.

Rev. Johnson was admitted, by Bishop Kemper, in 1858 to the first order of the Episcopal ministry at Faribault and left in charge of the mission at Gull Lake in 1859. He stayed here until the Sioux outbreak of 1862, and when the other Episcopal missionaries left, he remained. In 1869 the Gull lake mission was removed to the reservation at White Earth. Rev. Johnson also went to White Earth and brought many of his people into the church.

A chapel and a parsonage were erected and Rev. Jospeh A. Gilfillan was assigned here as missionary in 1873. Rev. Johnson aided in establishing a school for the training of Indians to the clergy, and within a few years 9 Chippewas were ordained to the ministry.

Many Horses was a Piegan Siksika chief, sometimes referred to as "Sits in The Middle". He was born about the close of the 18th century. Many Horses was noted for his warlike character and for the large number of horses he had, which gave him his name. According to many accounts he started breeding horses immediately after the Piegan first got them from the Kutenai around 1804 or 1806. He made war on the Shoshoni for the purpose of getting more horses.

Many Horses had such a large herd of horses that they numbered more than all the others belonging to his tribesmen and required a large number of herders to take care of them. Many Horses was a signer of the treaty on the upper Missouri, October 17, 1855 which he signed under the name Little Dog. This was the first treaty to be signed with the white man. Many Horses was killed at the battle of Cypress Hill between the Piegan and the allied Crows in 1867.

Mark Arthur was a Nez Perce born about 1873. When he was a very young man, his mother was captured along with others of Chief Joseph's tribe. For many years young Mark became a wanderer among many tribes until 1880 when he found his way back to the Nez Perce reservation. He entered Mission school and began to prepare for the ministry. When the Nez Perce captives were returned from Indian Territory to the Nez Perce reservation, Mark found his mother among them. He took care of her for many years until her death.

Around the year 1900, Mark was ordained by the Walla Walla presbytery and became pastor of the oldest Presbyterian church west of the Rocky Mountains at Lapwai, Idaho. In 1905 he was elected delegate to represent both the Indian and the white man at the general assembly of the Presbyterian church. ●RW



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**When twenty-two year old Frank Mayer arrived in Texas, the great buffalo hunt was at its height. They hunted with shotguns, light rifles, and wounded more of the buffalo than they killed. Mayer equipped himself with a telescopic - sighted .45 - 120 - 550 Sharps rifle plus a .40 - 70 and .40 - 90 Sharps. Mayer made a science of killing buffalo!**

*Frank Mayer, famed buffalo hunter. He hunted and killed buffalo for profit from 1872 to 1875 when he decided there were too many buffalo hunters and too little buffalo. He lived to be 103. He died in 1954 at Fairplay, Colorado.*

# FRANK MAYER

A weird assortment of gun - toters were busy hunting buffaloes in Texas when 22 - year old Frank Mayer arrived in the Lone Star State in the spring of 1872 to try his hand at making a fortune in "buffalo dollars". None knew better than Frank that the slaughter of the great bison herds was an unsavory business at best, but he needed money and this seemed the quickest way to acquire it.

Young Mayer became an object of curiosity to the hide hunters, for he carried with him a fine 10 - power, German - made, telescope sight; an unheard - of accessory on the buffalo plains.

Mayer found the world's greatest slaughter of wildlife literally booming around him, the thunder of gunfire resounding daily from sunrise to sunset on the rolling Texas plains. Veterans of both the Union and Confederate armies were banging away at the sluggish beasts with old army muskets; Eastern "sportsmen" were shooting the big buffs with light sporting rifles and shotguns loaded with slugs; some few hunters, endowed with more guts than brains, were using Colt and Remington six-guns at ranges of 6 to 10 yards. As an inevitable result of this clumsy barrage, more buffaloes were being wounded than killed outright, a fact which disgusted and angered the true professional hunters who went about the grim job of destroying the vast herds in sober, business - like fashion.

Methodically, the youthful Mayer went about assem-



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*Buffalo bulls, members of the large herd on the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Cache, Oklahoma, pause for a moment to look into the camera. They no longer fear being shot at.*

# Scientific Buffalo Hunter

By Norman B. Wiltsey

bling his outfit in Texas. He had made a stake working and adventuring in Mexico, now he spent it freely but shrewdly to acquire his hunting equipment.

Reasoning logically that guns are of primary importance to a professional hunter, Frank bought the best rifles obtainable. His precious telescope sight he had fitted to a .45 - 120 - 550 Sharps, weighing 16 pounds and sighted in to hit the bullseye at 200 yards. For alternate rifles — an absolute necessity in those days of black power ammunition and excessive fouling of barrels — he selected a .40 - 70 and a .40 - 90 Sharps. Wisely, he spent $225 for a complete reloading outfit. Thousands of hides were lost when hunters ran out of cartridges in the field. Frank didn't intend to lose a single skin playing the fool *that* way.

Next in importance to proper shooting irons was the selection of an experienced partner. Here Mayer was lucky, teaming up with Bob McCrea who had already put in three profitable years at hide hunting. They made an improbable pair: the lanky, rawhide-lean Texan and the soft - spoken, university educated Mayer; but they hit it off together from their very first meeting. McCrea was a "savvy hombre" in the parlance of the oldtimers. He was an invaluable aid to Frank in putting an outfit together: buying horses, wagons, tents and supplies, and hiring a cook and skinners.

"We made quite an impressive appearance when all was assembled and ready for the hunt," wrote Mayer in his journal. "I doubt that any but a large band of Indians would have the nerve to attack us."

Nevertheless, the Indians challenged them on their very first hunt. The Kiowas and Comanches were wasp - mean that hectic spring of 1872, knowing surely that their nomadic way of life and indeed their very existence were threatened by the hordes of hide hunters encroaching ruthlessly on their ancestral hunting grounds. A number of whites were killed and their wagons burned before most of the hide men decided to try their luck in Kansas, beyond "bad Injun" country. Mayer and McCrea talked the situation over and decided to work the north Texas plains in spite of the hostile red men.

Six days out from base camp, a band of Comanches made a pass at the expedition. "The lookout warned us in plenty of time," recalled Frank. "Nobody got rattled, even the cook. Cookie grabbed his old shotgun and loaded both barrels with buckshot — he was ready for 'em. We placed out two wagons about 20 feet apart, parallel with each other, and tied our horses between them. We stacked bales of buffalo hides across the openings at both ends for breastworks.

"We knew they'd circle us at the start of the attack, so we put one man at each end of the barricade behind the buffalo bales and two men behind the wagon wheels on each side. All sides were covered, so we just sat tight and waited for 'em to make their move. We counted strongly on the fact that Indians are the world's most practical fighters — they'll never make an all-out attack on an armed and alerted foe unless the odds are heavily in their favor and they can kill you without risking casualties.

"Indians are smart tacticians in warfare — they calculate the chances of success beforehand. Well, right off I aimed to let 'em know beyond the shadow of a doubt that cleaning up our outfit would prove too costly for them to turn a profit on the deal. I had a plan in mind that might throw a chill into them before they started."

Riding fast and strung out to present a difficult target, the Comanches started their famous and dreaded "wheel" formation around the barricaded wagons at about 500 yards distance and began gradually to close in.

"The poor devils got the shock of their lives," remembered Mayer. "At about 400 yards I picked out the chief by spotting the *coup* feathers in his hair through the 'scope. I led him maybe thirty feet — his pony was on a dead run — and swung that 16 pound Sharps like I was leading a duck with a shotgun. The bullet hit plumb center and knocked him spinning off his horse. Lucky shot? Sure it was a lucky shot, yet only a heap of practice with that big rifle made it possible.



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"That one shot broke up the Comanche wheel. When the chief went down, the warriors clustered their horses around him on the prairie. They made a fat target bunched up like that, but we did no more shooting. After all, there was about sixty of them and only seven of us. We watched and waited, damned willing to call it quits. Pretty soon four braves picked up the dead chief, two on a side, and carried him off a-wailing as they rode. We were mighty happy to see 'em go. We never had any more trouble with the Comanches. I could understand their feelings about us hide hunters, and if I had been in their place I'm sure I would have reacted the same way to the invasion of my territory and the wholesale destruction of my food supply."

"The Comanches were so impressed with Mayer's "Spirit Eye" rifle that a chief known as Medicine Arrow sold Frank what was probably the first hunting license ever issued in the West. The fee was pretty high — ten silver dollars and ten Mexican blankets — but Mayer considered it the best buy he ever made. Armed with his license — a stiff piece of buffalo hide, six inches long and three wide, carrying a message in picture writing — Frank was thereby entitled to shoot buffaloes in a broad area "as far as a horse can run in three days."

"What made it such a bargain," said Mayer, "was the fact that no other hide hunting outfits were allowed in that area by the Indians. We cleaned up $5000 worth of prime hides in three weeks before we moved on."

An expert marksman, Mayer seldom required more than one shot per buffalo, ranking with his partner Bob McCrea in that respect. He never went "hog-wild" with the lust for killing, like some hunters. (Tom Nixon, for example, burned out the barrel of a new Sharps while killing 120 buffs in less than an hour of shooting.) Every detail of Mayer's operation was meticulously planned to insure a steady profit.

He shot only 30 buffaloes a day on an average, as that was the maximum number of hides his three skinners could skin and peg out, working by hand. Many outfits used horses to pull the hides off the carcasses, thereby stretching the skins out of shape, often tearing them, and always leaving pieces of flesh on the inside — flesh which quickly turned putrescent to rot the hide beneath.

Mayer paid his crew well, telling them that he preferred fewer hides of high quality to rolling up a big score. He had only contempt for hunters like Brick Bond, so-called "Champion of the Hide Hunters," who averaged 97 kills a day in the bloody fall and winter of 1875-76 for a record one-man bag of 5,855 buffaloes.

Mayer was a careful craftsman with his 'scope-sighted .45 - 120 Sharps. Using a steel bipod shooting stick specially made for him, Frank could drop a buff out beyond 500 yards when necessary. His preference as to range was 200 yards and under, however, to be virtually certain of clean one - shot kills, causing a minimum of suffering for the buffalo. His best string was 59 clean kills out of 62 shots. The other three animals were mortally hit but did not die within the 10 to 15 seconds considered by Frank to be a clean kill. His favorite target was always the neck, since the heart was a much more difficult mark to hit precisely.

Yet, marksman that he was, Mayer never quite equalled the record set by Bob McCrea. Hunting alone along the Brazos River, McCrea spotted a small herd of buffaloes grazing the

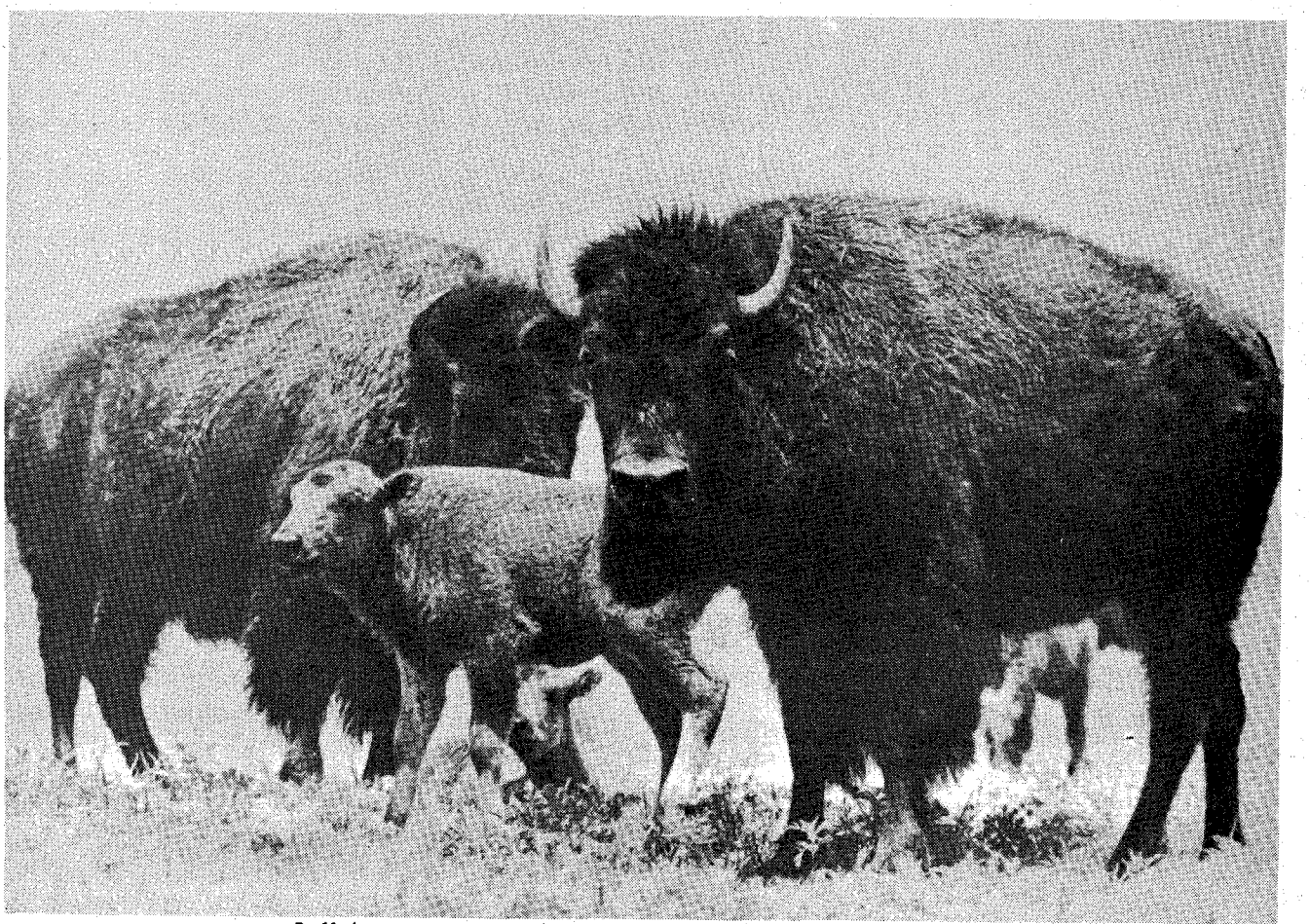

Photo by E. P. Haddon

*Buffalo are a protected species on many Western game refuges.*



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Photo by E. P. Haddon

*Buffalo graze on the Sullys Hills Refuge in North Dakota.*

bottomlands. Approaching under the crests of the low hills, Bob rode to within 300 yards and there made his stand. Setting up a rest of crossed sticks secured with a rawhide knot, McCrea dropped the buffs one by one with a single well-placed bullet apiece from his Remington .44 - 90 - 400 rifle. Each shot struck the neck or the heart, the only target area of the buffalo in which a hit resulted in a clean kill. Fifty-four shots; fifty-four dead "buffler."

McCrea's feat was never quite equalled by Mayer, a fact which precipitated much good-natured ribbing by the lanky Texan. Still, Mayer never conceded that the Remington used by McCrea was more accurate than his own Sharps, insisting that it "was the man behind the gun that made the difference."

In addition to good marksmanship and the best of equipment, Mayer attributed his success as a hunter to what he called "Buffalo savvy."

"You have to understand," explained Frank, "that a buffalo is a fairly stupid animal and utterly unpredictable except for one important characteristic, its dull curiosity. At every stand I utilized that curiosity in this manner: After locating a bunch of likely buffs and taking my shooting position as close as possible in cover on a rise of ground, I'd pick out an old cow and shoot her in the lungs. A buffalo won't go down right off unless shot in the neck or heart, so that old cow would stand there with her legs braced and her eyes glassy and slowly bleed to death.

"The other buffs would smell the blood and mill around her, bunching up real accommodating for me. All I had to do was drop 'em one by one until the whole group was down. Some squeamish folks might well say that this was a cruel method of hunting. Maybe so, but the only animal to suffer was the cow and even she didn't suffer long. The others I usually killed with one shot apiece, and they never knew what hit 'em."

Mayer quit hide hunting late in 1875 with a full poke. "Too many hunters and too few buffaloes," he told his friends. Those who knew him best declared that Frank was just sick to death of the endless killing. A Civil War veteran from the last year of the conflict — he had enlisted at the age of 15 — Mayer re-enlisted in the Army after renouncing hide - hunting and served through the military mop - up of the Sioux after the Custer debacle at the Little Big Horn in June of '76, and the later Apache wars. He served 37 years, retiring in 1913 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Restless as ever at 63, Colonel Mayer journeyed to the diamond mines of Australia, helped build a railroad in Brazil, returned to serve as a law officer in Colorado, and hunted moose and brown bear in Alaska. He regretfully discarded his old single - shot Sharps for the latter adventure, taking along a .405 Winchester and a .35 Remington automatic.

Nearing 70, his shooting eye remained as keen and his hands just as steady as they had been on the buffalo plains almost a half century before. The Colonel bagged a 1500 - pound brown bear with two shots from the .405 — one in the neck, one in the heart; and he dropped an 1100 - pound bull moose with a single heart shot from the .35.

Finally settling down in Fairplay, Colorado, Colonel Mayer hunted regularly each fall until 1951. He shot his last buck in 1950 at the age of 100; then he hung the rifle on his bedroom wall along with his beloved Sharps .45 - 120, and announced that his "hunting and roving days" were over. Frank died of the "infirmities of extreme old age" in 1954 at the age of 103.

Jim (Rawhide) Wilson, who knew Mayer in the old buffalo hunting days, paid Frank a wonderful tribute in his book *My Friends of the Buffalo Plains.*

"Frank Mayer was the most remarkable man I ever knew; what I would call the *complete* man. He was always in splendid physical condition and mentally keen and alert. He never wasted priceless time re-living the past or fearing the future; he lived always in the present and made the most of every moment. If I'd had a son, I could have wished him no better career than to grow up emulating Frank Mayer." ●**RW**

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Articles written by Col. Mayer in *The American Rifleman* for September and October, 1934.
*My Sixty Years on the Plains,* by Wm. T. Hamilton (New York, 1905)
*The American Bison,* by M.S. Garretson (New York, 1938)



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## BEN HODGES

*(continued from page 27)*

Ben's next victim, however, did not take his loss so philosphically. When the entire herd belonging to a dairyman named Cady was stolen one night, the circumstantial evidence pointed to the diminutive cowhand, and he was charged with the crime. He would have spent some pre-trial time in jail had not Bob Wright, convinced that Ben was innocent this time, paid his bond. It seemed certain, though, he would be convicted, for he had few real friends, a bad reputation, and no lawyer.

At the trial, Ben pleaded his own case. Following the presentation of all the evidence, he rose to address the jury and proceeded to talk for over two hours, often making them laugh in spite of the fact he was dead serious.

At one point Ben cried out, "What! Me!? The descendant of old grandees of Spain, the owner of a land grant in New Mexico embracing millions of acres, the owner of gold mines and villages situated on that grant of whom I am sole owner, to steal a miserable, miserly lot of old cows!? Why, the idea is absurd! No, gentlemen; I think too much of the race of men from which I sprang, to disgrace their memory."

At another point Ben, defying consistency, represented himself as a poor but honest cowhand being prosecuted by personal enemies. He was at all times persuasive and entertaining, though confusing. When he had finished his entreaty, Ben had won his case. It took but fifteen minutes for the jury to return the verdict of not guilty!

Three days later, the missing cows came home, none the worse for wear. It was later divulged that Ben had indeed stolen and driven them to a hidden canyon, fifty miles distant. His appearance at the trial left the herd unguarded, and when a furious storm came up, the cows started moving. Ben had been acquitted by the time they returned. Once again the black man's incredulous luck had held up!

Ben Hodges' ambition knew no bounds, and he next sought appointment as Livestock Inspector at Dodge City. He petitioned Governor Morrill for the job and cited his services to the Republican Party, many commendable, though unperformed, acts being listed. Of course, nearly everyone had signed the petition — saloonkeepers, gamblers, cowboys, dance-hall girls, even businessmen. They considered the idea as a big joke.

But Bob Wright, Print Olive, Beverly Culver and others who knew "Benjy" best were not laughing. They knew that Ben's asking to be Livestock Inspector was "like a goat asking to watch over the cabbage patch". They immediately informed the governor that Ben was the most competent cattle thief in the region; and his chances in politics were thereby vetoed. The little cowpuncher never forgave these men for coming between him and a cattle kingdom.

In 1883 the scene of Ben's shenanigans shifted temporarily from Dodge City to St. Louis when he accompanied Chalkey Beeson's Cowboy Band as "mascot" on their first trip east. Short of money, he was forced to get a room at a tawdry hotel away from the rest of the band members — a situation which disgruntled him to no end.

Within 24 hours Ben was found in the best hotel in St. Louis, firmly settled in a suite. Written on the page of the hotel register, to the amazement of the cowboys, was the title "Honorable Ben Hodges". This esteemed handle was cause for a lengthy session of rapid - fire questions, at which Ben laughed heartily.

Ben explained that he had gone to a commission firm and contracted to send them three trainloads of cattle from his "extensive western ranches" direct to St. Louis. Describing his ranch holdings in minute detail while mentioning the names of several outstanding Dodge City merchants, he completely bamboozled the unsuspecting commission men into advancing him the necessary cash to pay for the hotel suite!

Considering himself now equal in stature to the band members, Ben brazenly dressed in like manner — a circumstance which was to get him into trouble with the local lawmen. As part of their costume, his companions carried six-shooters on their hips. This practice was against the law in St. Louis, but the Cowboy Band had obtained special permission from the police to carry the weapons. Undaunted, Ben, a self-styled bodyguard, carried his six-gun, too.

The custom in Dodge City when a fire broke out was for the first man who saw it to whip out his gun and fire into the air in rapid succession. When Ben saw a fire-wagon roar down Olive Street, he was the "first man" in downtown St. Louis to whip out his six-shooter and fire several shots in the air as an alarm. Within moments he found himself surrounded by police officers who hustled him off to jail in less time than it took to blink an eye.

For once, Ben's ready wit and tongue failed to set him free, and only through the tactful diplomacy of Chalkey Beeson was this accomplished! This narrow escape from a permanent visit to the hoosegow caused the grateful Ben to assure his benefactor that he would stay on the best of behavior for the remainder of the trip.

Ben managed to keep his promise until the train that took the band back to Dodge City was a few miles away from the "friendly" cow-town. Then, rounding up all the blankets he could find, he threw them out the window. When he got off the train, he went back and picked them up, earning for himself a few more things without actual work.

Now long after his return to Dodge, Ben found himself in a tight situation again. Victor Carson caught the little cowhand in the act of cutting some steers out of his herd. The angry rancher chased Ben all the way to Dodge, staying just far enough behind to snap the long last of his cattle whip across the back of the would-be rustler every now and then.

Carson obviously figured the sting of the whip was punishment enough, for when Ben crossed the town limits, the cattleman gave up the chase. Once again, Hodges' luck at escaping the long arm of the law had stayed with him, but not without a painful experience!

A short time later, Ben unwittingly walked into a tense situation when he shuffled into a bar where workmen from the Soule Ditch were drinking. Neal Brown, a local badman with a reputation for shooting down people in "self-defense", looked at the black man and announced in a loud sneering voice: "Gentlemen, there is a horse thief in the crowd."

Quickly, the customers backed away from the bar, leaving Brown and Ben facing one another. Ben, breaking out in his contagious smile, answered: "I'll bet there's two of 'em here."



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The crowd roared with laughing approval. Neal Brown soon joined in, and Ben escaped serious harm and possible death through his personable demeanor.

Ben's life as a cowhand, legal or otherwise, came to an end a short time later. Rheumatism, which he had contracted through many years of exposure on the range, began to have its affect upon his legs, making it impossible for him to mount a horse without extreme difficulty. Within months, even walking became a chore, and unable to lift his feet, he moved by dragging them. Out of necessity he began to make a living, for the most part, by begging.

Ben became a familiar figure on the streets of Dodge City, shuffling along with a basket under his arm, making the rounds of the different stores, where he helped himself to whatever he needed. No one paid much attention to him, other than to greet him and exchange jokes. His affliction and misfortune failed to daunt his spirits, and never a day passed when he wasn't in good humor, always greeting people with a smile on his face.

When old Ben Hodges was first stricken, a businessman by the name of G.M. Hoover built a two-room shack for him on the river bank in Dodge. There were no windows and only a piece of black oilcloth for a door, but Ben protected his home as if it were a castle. When he wanted to be particularly fierce about scaring people off his property, he would bolt out the doorway with an old Indian scalp on his head, stare at the trespasser with his beady eyes and, pointing a gun, declare: "You're trespassin' on my premises! I'll shoot your eye out!"

Needless to say, the transgresser never lingered long enough to learn whether Ben was bluffing or not!

Ben's crippling disease failed to slow down his always scheming mind, as businessmen were to discover one Thanksgiving holiday period. The big day was but twenty-four hours away when he told Victor Carson: "All you white folks are going to have ducks and nice things for Thanksgiving dinner, but ol' Ben will just have stew."

Carson had long ago forgiven the little black man for his attempts at cattle rustling, and his dejected looks were more than the cattleman could stand. He took Ben into Stubb's Grocery and told Lee Vollmer, the butcher, "Give Ben one of those ducks."

Ben immediately protested that he wanted a live duck, not one of those "packin' house ducks." Whereupon one of the largest was put aside for him, and Carson paid $1.25. Ben smiled in deep appreciation and shuffled out of the store. His benefactor vain-gloriously said to Vollmer, "Well, that will make him a Thanksgiving dinner."

"It should," the butcher answered with a smirk on his face. "He has eleven more in the back room!"

Ben made good use of the ducks, raising them as a means of supplementing his meager income. Shortly before Thanksgiving of the following year, Mrs. Bill Warshaw took note of how large the ducks had grown and wanted one for the holiday dinner. She asked Ben how much they cost.

"A dollah," he said.

"You'll have to keep it for a while," Mrs. Warshaw told him. "We're not quite ready for it."

The day before Thanksgiving, MR. Warshaw came back to get the duck, and asked Ben, "How much?"

"A dollah and a half!" came the reply.

"I thought you told my wife two weeks ago they were a dollar!" Warshaw protested.

"Twenty-five cents a week board bill," Ben answered.

When the Spanish - American War broke out, Ben, because of his Castilian ancestry, became a target for overzealous patriots who didn't want a "traitor" or "spy" in their midst. One particular afternoon, Ed Riney and Merritt Beeson, in the company of several recent army recruits, called on Hodges with the intention of hanging him from one of the nearby cottonwood trees.

It took only a few brief seconds for him to change his nationality from Spanish to Negro, but convincing the would - be hangmen that he was not of Spanish and Mexican descent, after years of claiming otherwise, was another matter. Ben had to argue extensively, using every crafty strategem he knew, before satisfying those present that he was indeed a black man.

During Pancho Villa's raids along the Mexican - United States border, the Mexican issue came up again, and a number of aliens were deported to their home country. A few months previous to this, Ben had begun to claim Spanish ancestry again, but with the recent outbreak of hostilities, he found it healthier to become a Negro once more. Finally, in 1919, after spending nearly a lifetime in the United States, he decided to become a citizen and filed his naturalization papers on which he stated he was a Negro.

Late in 1928, Ben became very ill and was sent to St. Anthony's hospital. Now 72 years of age, he must have known the end of the trail was near, but his demeanor remained pleasant, humorous and ... irascible. He was a trial to the nurses and delighted in frightening the younger ones with long, lurid tales of murders he committed in earlier years. One day, when a student nurse entered his room with a tray, Ben turned his beady eye on her, reached under his pillow as though for a revolver, and growled, "What you doin' here!? I'll shoot your eye out!"

The young nurse let out a loud shriek, threw the tray in the air, and ran from the room as fast as her legs could carry her.

Old Ben Hodges finally withered away and died in St. Anthony's in the summer of 1929. Because the residents of Dodge City had developed an attachment for the ugly, but picturesque fraud and liar, he was saved the ignominy of a pauper's funeral. They bought a casket, paid for the services, and buried old Ben in Maple Grove Cemetery within shouting distance of his old neighbors, the Wrights, Beesons, and Olives.

"We buried Ben there for a good reason," one of his pallbearers said. "We wanted him where they could keep an eye on him."

Thirty-six years after his death, an impressive headstone was purchased through contributions of friends and erected on the grave by the Ford County Historical Society. A final fitting tribute to one of Dodge City's most monumental frauds, it is inscribed: "Ben Hodges — Self-styled Desperado, A Colorful Pioneer." ● **RW**

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## FEUD BETWEEN TWO CITIES

*(continued from page 41)*

girls who were singing and prancing on the stage kept casting nervous glances upwards to the balcony. But the drama there proceeded relentlessly forward. Coy had moved closer to Thompson; Simms stepped back. Fisher, an amused smile on his handsome face, stood beside Ben with Foster directly in front of them.

"Joe," Thompson stuck out his hand in an obviously posed attitude, "I want to shake hands with you."

Foster drew back, and although it seems he could have had no doubt as to the emotions his response would bring, his voice was cold and firm.

"Ben, there is room enough in the world for both of us without our paths crossing and I will not shake hands with you."

Thompson stared at Foster with icy blue eyes. Finally he said, "Then come and take a drink with me."

"No," Foster answered. "I won't drink with you, either."

"Then take this!"

Thompson's roaring .45 was in his hand before the last word, but Jacobo Coy was equally as swift, and the deflected shot struck Foster in the leg. As if on cue, flashes of flame erupted from different points throughout the theater boxes. Thompson and Fisher crumpled, riddled and lifeless.

Within minutes of the shooting, a tremendous crowd gathered outside the Vaudeville, overflowing Main Plaza and spilling into the nearby narrow streets.

Inside the theater, Police Chief Phil Shardein had taken over. Foster, his leg shattered, was removed to the same house where Jack Harris had died; Foster's condition would worsen gradually until he, too, would expire as the result of a hemorrhage.

An Austin *Statesman* reporter declared:

"... When your reporter reached the scene, the two bodies were weltering in blood, and were laid out side by side, their faces carmined with life fluid. The stairs leading up to the scene of horror were as slippery as ice, and the walls were stained with blood and the floor was tracked with bloody shoeprints. The dissolute women, with blanched faces, crowded around with exclamations and broken sobs, asking, "Which is Ben" and "Show me Ben" and "Is that him?" Even in his death, amid the garish surroundings, the grim reputation of the man stood forth as strong as ever. Thompson was shot twice through the brain, one ball entering squarely in front through the left eyebrow, and the other just above it. Both holes could have been covered with a half dollar. His face wore a stern expression, and the upper lip is drawn tight across

From the photo collection of Carl Breihan

*Gravesite of Ben Thompson at San Antonio.*



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the teeth. The brain is visible through the wound in the eyebrow."

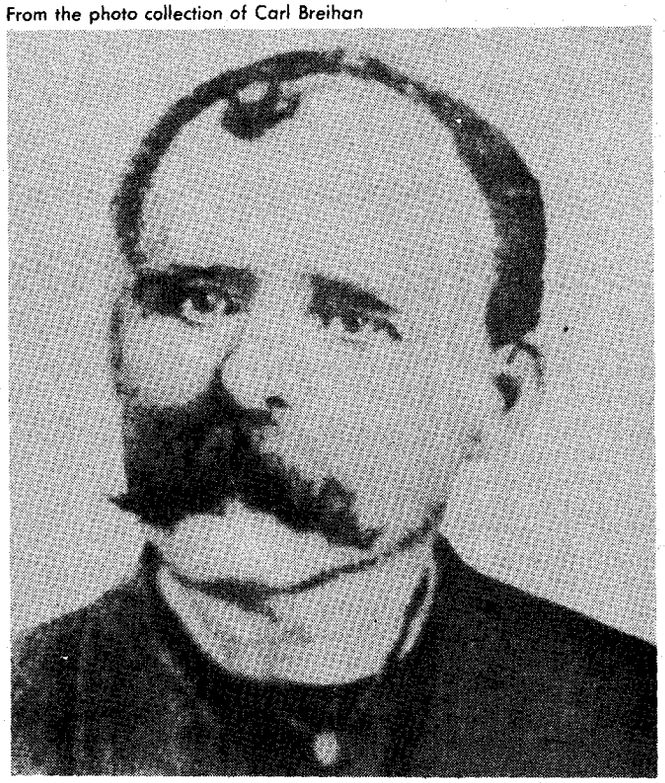
An autopsy later revealed Thompson's body carried eight bullets, five in the head.

Again, in sudden reversal, the Austin newspapers rose in wrath to defend the memory of its marshal. The San Antonio *Express'* headline: "A Good Night's Work" caused the Austin *Statesman* to respond in high dudgeon that "The San Antonio *Express* ought not to commend murder, committed by whom and upon whom it may be, for murder is murder, and is always wrong."

The debate raged fiercely for months then finally died away, to be replaced by other news of more recent vintage.

The corner of Main Plaza and Soledad Street, where the Vaudeville Theatre stood, eventually became known as "The Fatal Corner" after a series of shootouts occurred with a score of at least eight men suffering violent deaths there. But none in the history of South Texas matched the sensationalism and furor marking the killings of Jack Harris, Ben Thompson and King Fisher, and the ill feelings it caused between the two cities of Austin and San Antonio. ●RW

From the photo collection of Carl Breihan



*Last known photo of Ben Thompson, taken a short time before his death in San Antonio.*

REFERENCE SOURCES:

Archives of Bexar County District Clerk Elton Cude for original transcripts of inquests, hearings, etc.

Newspapers of that period in Austin and San Antonio.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## SANGRE DE CRISTOS

*(continued from page 23)*

and headed back to their camp. When they reached the edge of the San Luis Valley, they discovered their estimations were off, and they were on Cottonwood Creek and miles from their camp. Still they were encouraged by the luck they had that day. It was the best luck they ran across on the whole vacation. They decided to stay on for just a few more days and go back to the mine.

But then their luck turned back. De Foe could not find his notes and charts. They were lost on the way back to camp. They decided they were through with prospecting. It was enough to last a lifetime.

Warner, however, ran across the samples he picked up at the prospect hole. For want of anything better to do and just to satisfy his curiosity, he took them to be assayed. Amazingly enough, they showed more than twenty ounces of gold to the ton. De Foe, in Denver, sent his samples to be checked, and they showed as much as forty-five ounces of gold to the ton.

Within the week, the three men decided the ore was well worth mining, and they went back to try and find their claim. They rode into the Sangre de Cristos in the dead of winter, but the snow was over three feet deep, which added to the hopelessness of their task. They searched again in the spring, and they searched again for the entire summer. In fact, de Foe finally told their story in 1891, saying, "I guess we're just about to give up the search."

Now the interesting thing about the search of de Foe, Warner, and their friend, Burt, is they were actually on the western slope of Marble and Humboldt Mountains. And along with their find, there are others in the same small area.

One of the most authentic stories comes from three well known prospectors: S. J. Harkman, E. R. Oliver, and H.A. Melton. These three men were prospecting in the Sangre de Cristos on the San Luis side, about two miles north of what is now called Dead Man's Camp, when they were hit by a heavy snow storm. They decided to seek shelter under a ledge of rock, and from their crude shelter they saw the mouth of a cave across the canyon. They decided to visit it, and there they found a long, low tunnel leading from the cave.

The three men gathered dry pine branches for torches and started to explore. They entered the opening on their hands and knees and in single file. The passage extended about ten or twelve feet, then became what seemed to be a large vault. The vault was about twenty feet wide, and in the far wall there was a second passage. The second passage was about ten feet long and it, too, emptied into a large chamber.

The men carefully were feeling their way along the sides when Oliver, who was leading the party, struck his foot against something. He felt around and found it was a human skull. The men stopped and built a fire on the floor. There in the light of the small fire they discovered four more skulls and skeletons scattered about near by.

Just skeletons, no tools, guns or knives.

Outside the cave again, they gathered as much fire wood as they could and returned to the second chamber. They found still another skeleton a short distance away and still another passage, longer and not so low and narrow. It led to a small chamber with irregular walls. On one side there was a shelf-like cut exten-

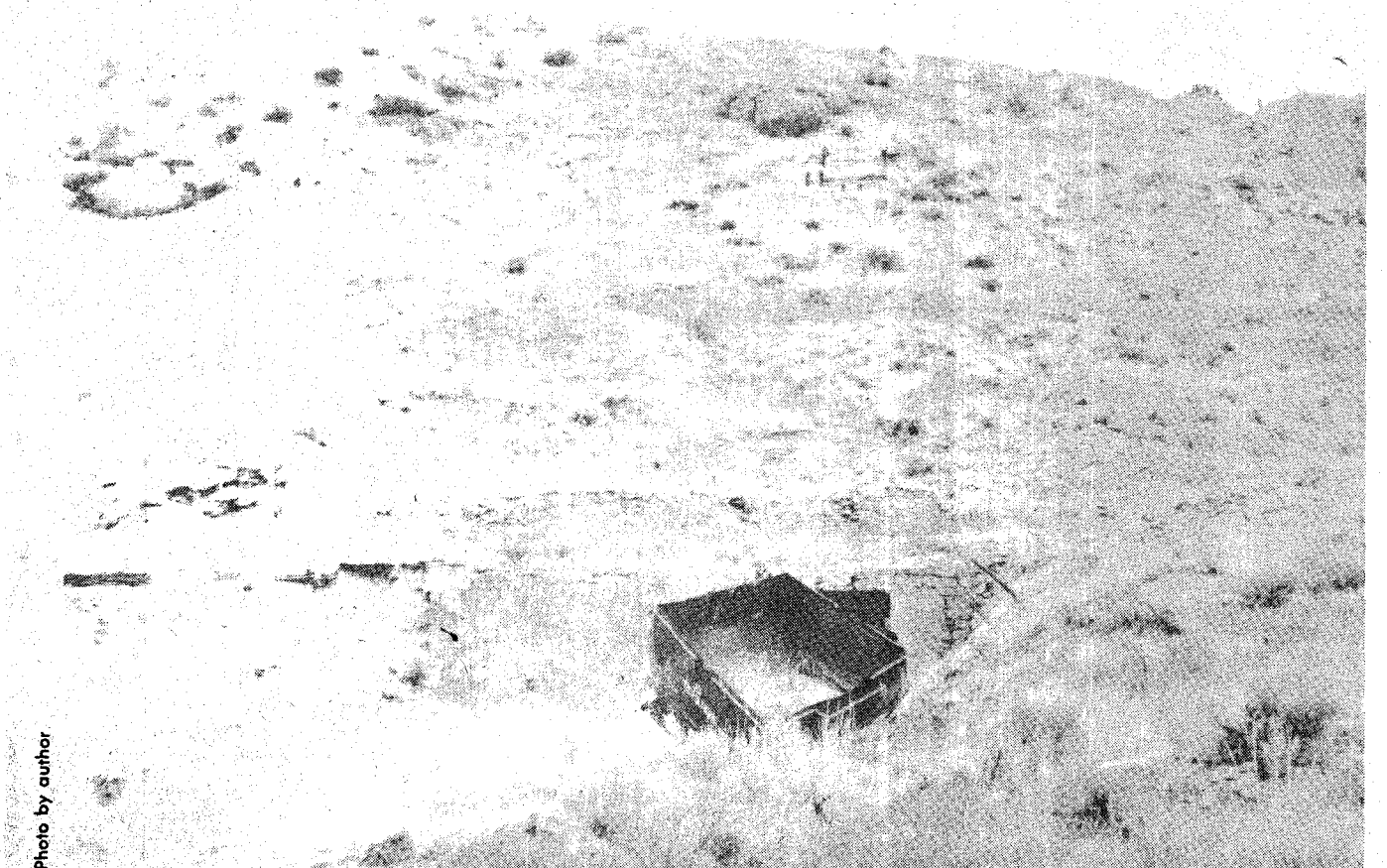

Photo by author

*Old mining camp at Querida, Colorado. Photo taken in 1966.*



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ding a considerable distance out from the wall and about ten inches from the floor of the cave. Under these cuts they found peculiarly shaped stones. Lifting them, they found them to be very heavy.

With close inspection they saw they were crude, dusty bars of pure gold. Excitedly, the men gathered them up and headed out of the cave. When they returned to Silver Cliff, they found the bars were worth $900.00 each. In their hurried inspection of the cave they only picked up five bars, but they were sure there were many more left for their next visit.

Of course, the three prospectors, selling these crude gold bars, aroused curiosity, but as they told their story, they refused to tell anyone the exact location. Spring came and they slipped off, but they never found the cave again. They thought it would be easy, but on their return they found so many places which looked just like the area of the cave that they became confused. In fact, practically everything in the entire area seemed strange. They went back again and again, and others have searched, but no one has found the Dead Man's Cave.

Here we have two cave legends and one lost mine legend, all located within the confines of one small area in the mighty Sangre de Cristos. Are they all about the same gold? Yes, I believe they are only different tales of the mysterious secret and rich gold mine of the conquistadors.

I am sure somewhere on the slopes of these mountains lie treasures beyond belief, just waiting to be found by some lucky prospector.

Footnote: These location numbers are based on the U.S. Government maps where the locations of areas are in terms of a township and range. The number after "T" is the township number and the number after "R" is the range number. Using this system and a map of the San Isbell National Forest (free), one can readily locate the area discussed in this article. ●RW

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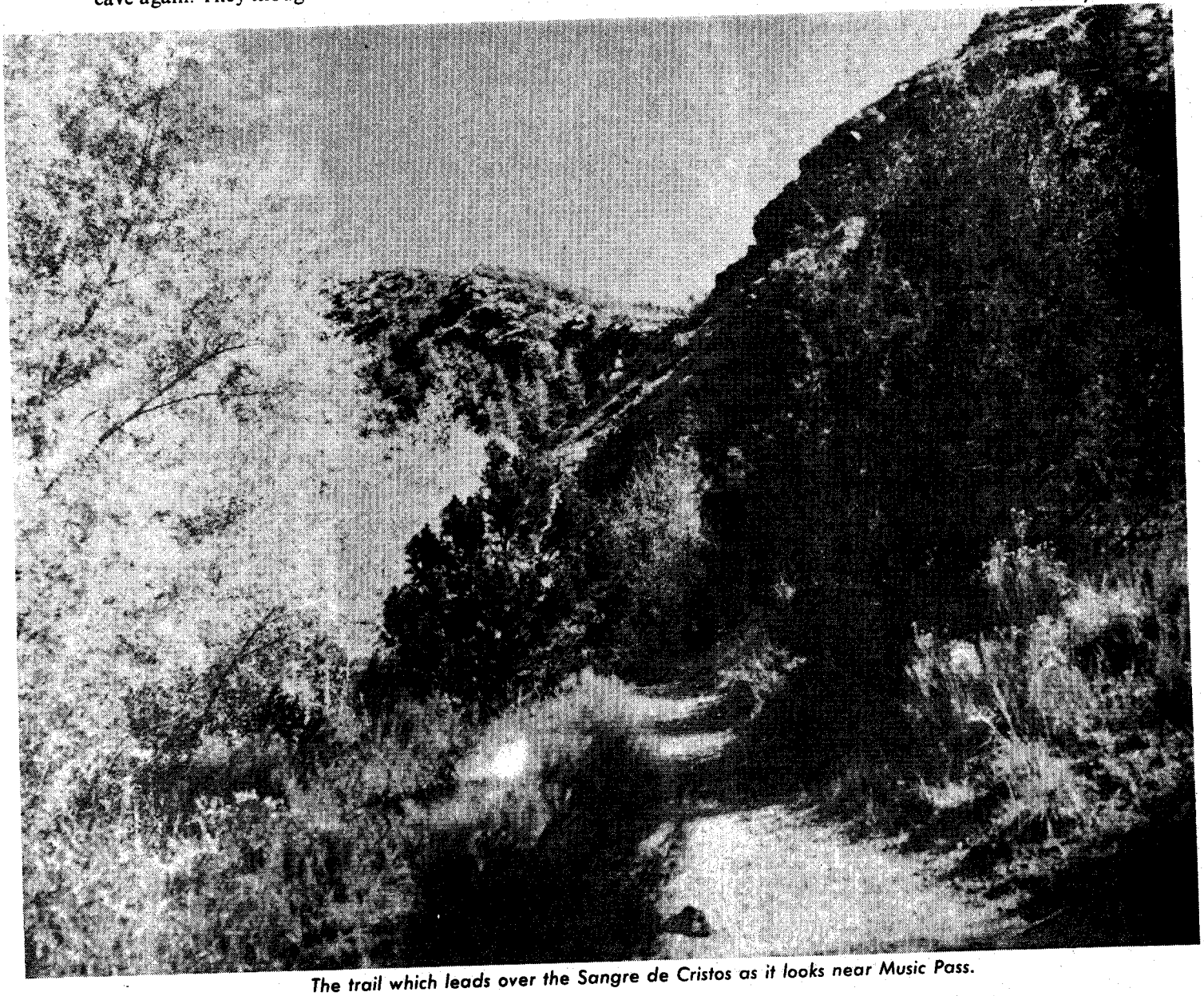
Photo by author



*The trail which leads over the Sangre de Cristos as it looks near Music Pass.*



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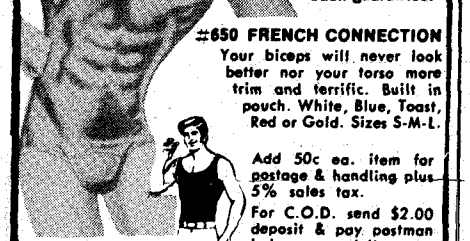

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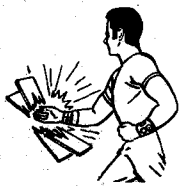

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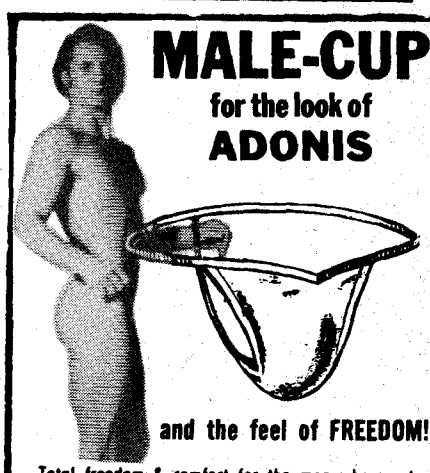

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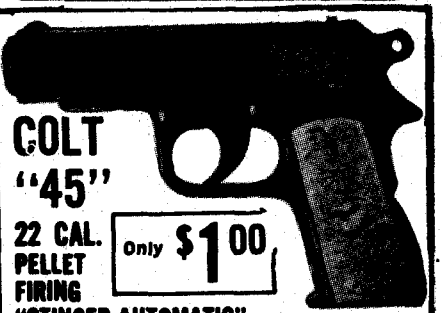

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#976 Twin cinch-panels trim inches off your waist and flattens your abdomen. Lycra power knit stretches and breathes with you to give you the sleekest physique ever. Built in masculine support for superb comfort. Sizes Small (28-32), Med (33-36), Lg (37-40), XL (41-44). **$6.99**

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## MAIL ROUNDUP

*(continued from page 3)*

writer a chance that has never written anything before?

This is just my opinion, but I hope you think it over.

William J. Kelly

Hillhaven Convalescent Hospital,
2200 East Chapman,
Fullerton, California 92631

**Take another look at REAL WEST. Mr. Breihan is a regular contributor. Every issue of REAL WEST contains an article by a new writer, and we try to use new and different photos; however, no new photos can be taken of historical figures who passed away 50 to 100 years ago.**

Gentlemen:

After reading "The Glory of Garry Owen" in your January 1973 issue, I must admit my doubt in the integrity of your magazine. I wonder at the professionalism of your staff for having allowed an article of this quality to appear for all the world to read.

The article begins by stating that Custer's troopers "rode from three sides to completely defeat the **forces** of Chief Black Kettle. This November 27, 1868 Battle of Washita in **Wyoming** was probably Custer's greatest triumph and was certainly one of the most smashing victories in the history of the cavalry." How sickening?

The forces of Black Kettle consisted mainly of old folks, women and children. The battle should be more accurately called a massacre and occurred in Oklahoma; to call this Gorgeous George's greatest triumph and the cavalry's most smashing victory is not only disgusting but doesn't say much for the 7th, which is completely contradictory to the author's purpose. Such inaccurate writing has no place in today's literature. Your magazine has a token American Indian special feature every month, but by in large most of the articles show little consideration for Indian feelings.

Again, the almighty dollar speaks, because I really find it hard to believe that your magazine knows nothing of this infamous Washita; therefore, you published an article that you know was untrue just to sell a few more magazines and to appeal to that group of ignorami that still believe Custer was an honorable, gallant soldier.

Elsewhere in the same issue, an article called "Montana's Murder Trading Post" tells of how a man named Bowles "became enamored of the daughter of Long Horse, a Crew chief. Perhaps her buckskin dress elaborately decorated with glass beads of many colors, elk teeth, white bird bones and other gimcracks attracted him." Don't you think men are usually attracted to women with pleasing faces and figures rather than to the beads, teeth, and bones on their dresses, or don't you think Indian women can be good looking? Again, a total disconcern for Indian pride and a second-rate article to boot. Don't you think the American public has been showered with enough prejudicial literature on the American Indian? Here's hoping your standards improve.

Frank J. Cuphone
USCG Actys, Guam,
Box 76, FPO San Francisco,
California 96637

**The battle massacre of the Washita was fought in Oklahoma, not Wyoming. Custer will always be controversial, with groups taking sides; some believing he was a devil, others that he was a saint. REAL WEST publishes both sides and allows the readers to decide for themselves. Mrs. Shulsinger's article in this issue of REAL WEST comes closest to our personal views on Custer: not all bad, not all good. Women in all ages have attempted to attract men by their manner of dress and men have responded. Mr. Kildare meant no offense in referring to "beads, elk teeth, etc".**

Dear Sir:

In your October 1973 REAL WEST, W. Wade of Poughkeepsie, N.Y. asked if there were any Indians by the name of Wade In Water and of what tribe. A well-known Indian woman of the Blackfeet Tribe in Western Montana was named Julia Wade in the Water. Her picture appeared in one of the famous "Indian Calendars" printed for the Great Northern Railway Company (now Burlington & Northern). They featured Blackfeet, Assiniboine & Piegan chiefs and Indian women of importance to the tribe, such as wives of chiefs or medicine men.

These calendars (originals) are now collectors' items as they were discontinued long ago. The pictures were natural color engravings or lithographs made from original paintings by the late Austrian artist, Weinold Riess, who came from Austria to the U.S. to study the habits of Western Indians. He became a trusted friend of the Blackfeet, and his original paintings would now bring a price almost as much as Charlie Russel's.

I'm sure some of the older members of the Blackfeet, Piegans or Assiniboines can confirm my statements, as I used to live very close to the Eastern boundary of the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana. In 1935 I helped clear the boundary line (at the foot of Sherburne Lake) between the Blackfeet Reservation and Glacier National Park. The line went up to the top of Boulder Ridge.

Walt Thayer
Box 75,
Wenatchee, Washington
98801 ●RW

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By E. S. "Rocky" LeGaye

Western Heritage Press, 1530 Bonnie Brae, Houston, Texas 77006

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This is an excellent book for the treasure hunters among us, and there are many. Mr. LeGaye is a diligent researcher and gives us detailed reasoning on the possibilities of finding the treasures he writes about. The book brings together Mr. LeGaye's articles which first appeared in REAL WEST. Highly recommended for treasure hunting buffs.

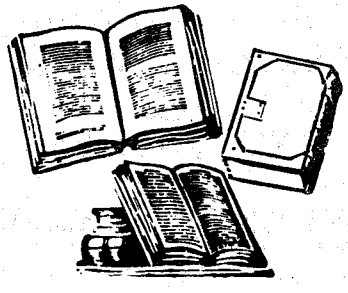
PEOPLE-EVENTS AND ERATH COUNTY, TEXAS

By Arden Jean Schuetz and Wilma Jean Shuetz

Ennis Favors, 2050 Crestridge Drive, Stephenville, Texas 76401

Cloth $3.95 201 pages

A history of Erath County told through incidents and factual stories gathered by the authors. The chapter headings are worth the price of the book: Bootlegger Convicts Bootlegger, Father Murders Daughter, Janitor Sees Casket Moves and Dives, Indians and the Killing of Claiborne Oxford, Night Time Graveyard Working, Pranksters in the Texas Legislature, Wife's Lover Talked Into Killing Husband and many, many others. ●RW





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It's a spewing smokestack. It's litter in the streets. It's a river where fish can't live.

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So the next time you see pollution, don't close your eyes to it.

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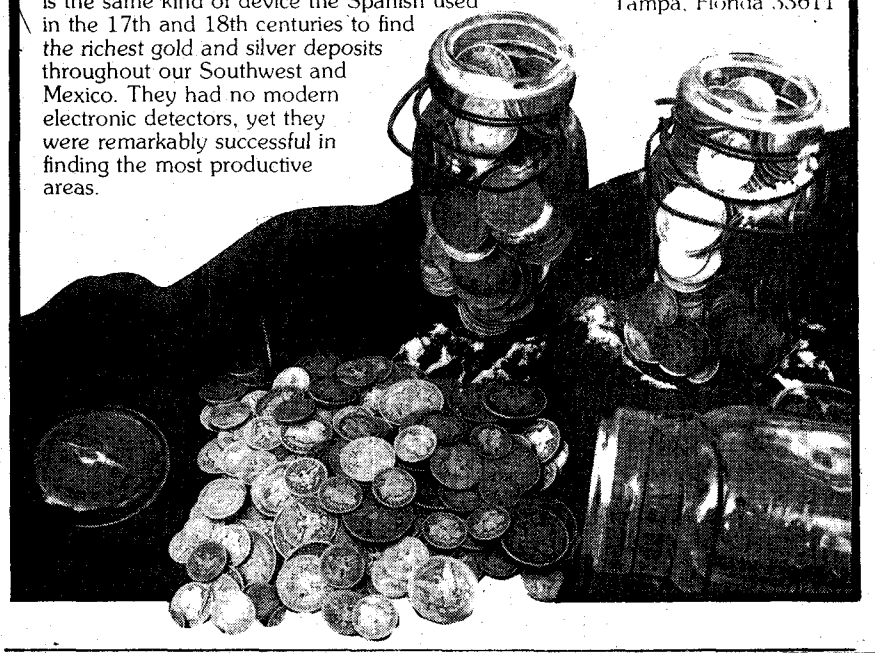

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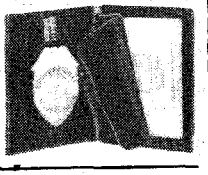

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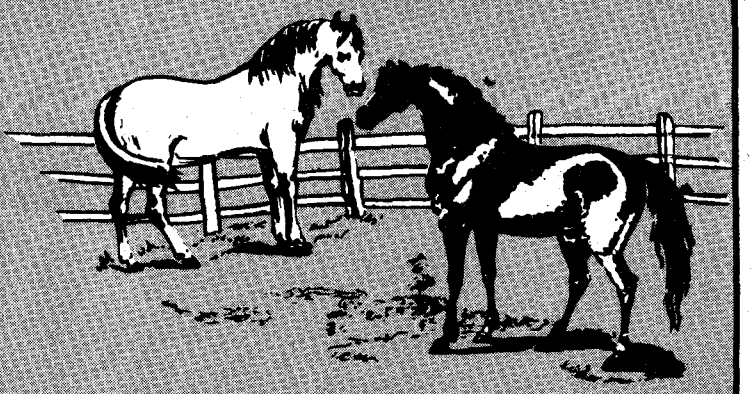

I SEE BY YESTERDAY'S NEWSPAPERS

AGARIAN INDIANS

The report of the Board of Indian Commissioners for 1881 says that the result of Indian labor during the past twelve years, since the beginning of the "peace policy", shows an increase of the products of the soil by Indian labor of nearly twelvefold, and at this rate of progress the time is not far distant when all semi - civilized Indians will be self - supporting, and the few tribes that remain wild and savage will soon follow their example. The Board earnestly renews their recommendations of past years in favor of granting lands in severalty to Indians.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
February 25, 1882

PETITION TO CONGRESS TO TREAT INDIANS FAIRLY

A Kansas Senator so far forgot himself, the other day, as to denounce an expression of womanly sympathy with the Indians who are so often cheated and outraged by Government agents as "sickly sentimentality". The occasion of this outburst was the presentation by Mr. Dawes of two monster petitions, containing the signatures of 100,000 women asking that Congress would keep faith with and treat honorably the various Indian tribes under the care of the Government.

Mr. Dawes, replying to the infelicitous remonstrance of the Kansas Senator, said truly that very much of the hostility of offending tribes is due to blundering on the part of the military authorities, and to unnecessary provocation of the Indians. Until we shall adopt and faithfully carry out a policy of common honesty and simple justice in our dealings with these "wards of the nation", we cannot with any decency, complain that they are a source of trouble and menace to the public peace.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
March 4, 1882

INDIANS EXECUTED

The three Indian scouts who took part in the treacherous attack on General Carr's troops last September and who were since sentenced to death, were hanged on Friday last at Fort Grant, A.T.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
March 11, 1882

AVALANCHE IN UTAH

A snow slide in the Big Cottonwood range in Utah buried a whole family — father, mother and five children — under forty tons of snow, and they were all found lying naturally in their beds, having evidently been smothered in their sleep.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
March 11, 1882

POLLUTING THE ENVIRONMENT IN 1882

The practice of pouring the debris from the mines into the rivers threatens serious damage to California. Already the valleys along some streams are being turned into deserts, and a party of fifteen farmers recently emigrated to Texas from Wheatland on Beaver River, because their once fertile lands had become almost worthless.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
March 18, 1882

CROW CHILDREN BEING SENT EAST

One hundred Crow children from a Montana Indian Agency are to be sent to Ohio farmers, who offer to take them and try to make useful citizens of them.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
March 25, 1882

COST OF INDIAN "PEACE"

Everybody knew the Indians were expensive, but the official figures from the War Department of the cost of keeping them quiet for the last ten years are startling — $5,058,821 for the Indian "wars" during that period, and no less than $25,474,759 for the maintenance of the United States Army kept west of the Mississippi, where there is nothing to speak of for soldiers to do except fighting and police - duty on Indian account.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
March 25, 1882

BUFFALO BILL, HEIR TO MILLION??

"Buffalo Bill" is one of seven persons who sued to recover about fifty acres on Euclid Avenue, Cleveland's aristocratic street, valued at a million and a half, which they claim belongs to them as heirs to Philip Cody, their grandfather.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
March 25, 1882

TO CIVILIZE SITTING BULL

It is proposed to transfer Sitting Bull and his immediate followers to the Yankton Agency, where they will be instructed in the usages and arts of civilization.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
April 8, 1882

JESSE JAMES KILLED

The career of Jesse James, the Western train - robber, had been so crowded with crimes that thoughtless people are likely to excuse any means of ending it as justifiable. Yet, there is something rather startling in the discovery that the Governor of a State has been privy to a plot for the killing of the outlaw by a pretended friend, and had practically promised in advance immunity for the murder. It is not strange that Missouri people should seek to be rid of such a desperado, but it is scarcely by compounding crime on the part of the authorities that the reign of



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criminals is to be ended.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, April 15, 1882

BENDER ARRESTED

A man who is declared to be "Old Man Bender", the Kansas murderer has been arrested in St. Louis.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, April 15, 1882

CHINESE BEING TERRORIZED

Owing to a system of terrorism which is being practiced in Arizona Territory towards Chinamen, in addition to other acts of lawlessness, Governor Tritle, last week, telegraphed to the President, asking assistance for the protection of life and property.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, April 15, 1882

WOMEN SUFFRAGE IN WYOMING

Although women vote freely in Wyoming, Governor Hoyt says that they don't care for office, and he never heard of one who desired active public life. A man may think one way and his wife another way, and yet they can get along harmoniously. The present Wyoming delegate in Congress is the strongest kind of a Democrat, while his wife is an enthusiastic Republican.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, April 15, 1882 •RW

THIS SPACE CONTRIBUTED BY THE PUBLISHER


## HOTSPURS by Patrick

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..END OF THE TRAIL!
..NO WATER..FOOD'S GONE..THE DESERT'S WON!
`COURSE WE COULD CRAWL ON OVER TO THE OUTPOST AND LAY IN A STORE OF SUPPLIES!
NO WAY..I WOULDN'T SPEND SPEND A DIME IN THAT PLACE SINCE THEY STOPPED GIVING TRADING STAMPS!
OUTPOST
PATRICK

As you locate a word in the diagram, circle it and cross it off the word list. All words are always found in a straight line either FORWARD, BACKWARD, UP, DOWN, or DIAGONALLY. No letters are ever skipped. You will not use up all the letters in a given diagram.

### CATTLE CALL

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| A | E | O | O | G | U | E | R | N | S | E | Y |
| L | R | R | D | N | A | L | H | G | I | H | B |
| B | D | N | E | N | R | O | H | G | N | O | L |

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| | S | H | O | E |
| | F | I | S | H |
| OPPOSITE OF GO | S | T | O | P |
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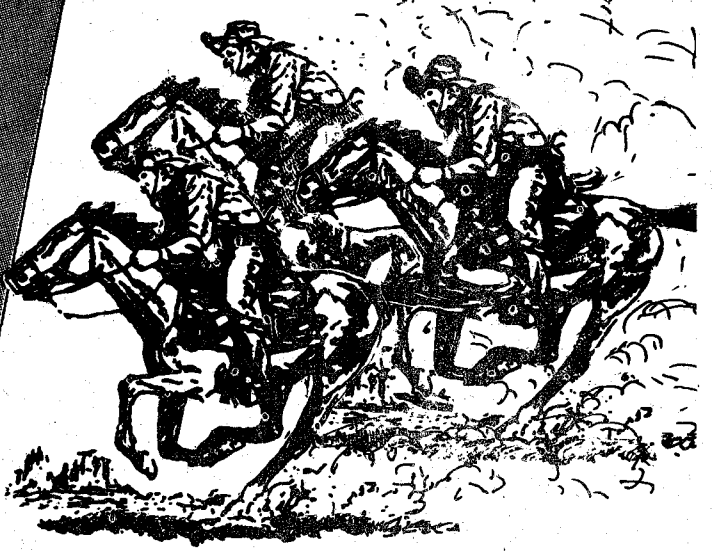

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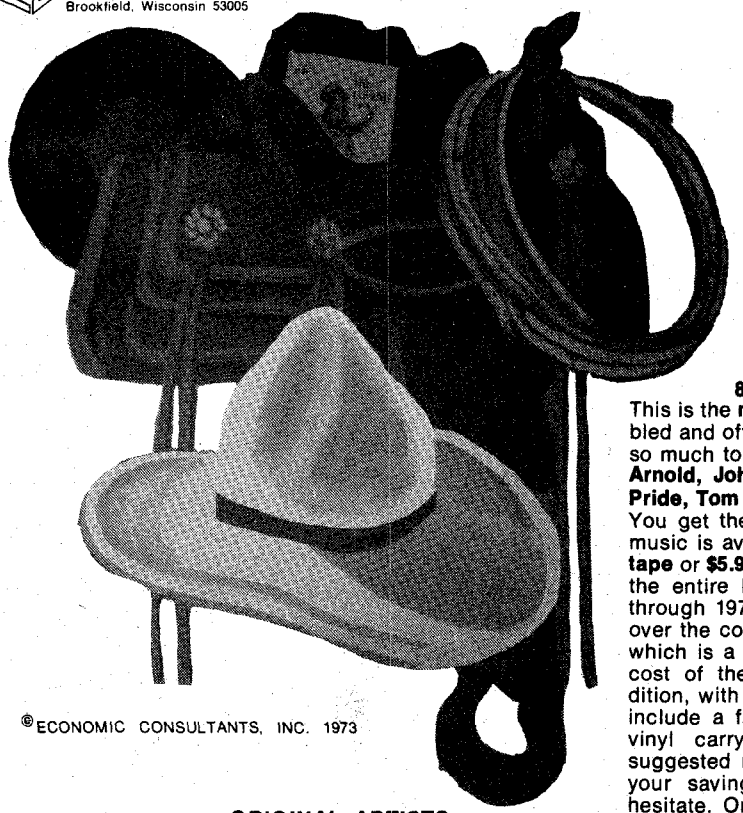

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## ORIGINAL ARTISTS

| TITLE | 1955 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Live Fast, Love Hard, Die Young | | Faron Young |
| If You Were Me and I Were You | | Webb Pierce |
| So Doggone Lonesome | | Johnny Cash |
| Mystery Train | | Elvis Presley |
| A Satisfied Mind | | Porter Wagoner |
| There She Goes | | Carl Smith |
| Folsom Prison Blues | | Johnny Cash |
| Cattle Call | | Eddy Arnold |
| You're Free To Go | | Carl Smith |
| I Don't Care | | Webb Pierce |
| Old Lonesome Times | | Carl Smith |
| In The Jailhouse Now | | Webb Pierce |
| I Forgot to Remember to Forget | | Elvis Presley |
| Your Good For Nothing Heart | | Webb Pierce |
| Eat, Drink and Be Merry | | Porter Wagonor |
| Love, Love, Love | | Webb Pierce |

| TITLE | 1956 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Heartbreak Hotel | | Elvis Presley |
| I Walk the Line | | Johnny Cash |
| I Was the One | | Elvis Presley |
| My Lips Are Sealed | | Jim Reeves |
| There You Go | | Johnny Cash |
| Don't Be Cruel | | Elvis Presley |
| Black Board of My Heart | | Hank Thompson |
| Train of Love | | Johnny Cash |
| Hound Dog | | Elvis Presley |
| Crazy Arms | | Ray Price |
| Love Me Tender | | Elvis Presley |
| Blue Suede Shoes | | Carl Perkins |
| I Want You, I Need You, I Love You | | Elvis Presley |
| Singing the Blues | | Marty Robbins |
| My Baby Left Me | | Elvis Presley |
| I've Got a New Heartache | | Ray Price |

| TITLE | 1957 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Great Balls of Fire | | Jerry Lee Lewis |
| Teddy Bear | | Elvis Presley |
| Geisha Girl | | Hank Locklin |
| 4 Walls | | Jim Reeves |
| Too Much | | Elvis Presley |
| A White Sportcoat | | Marty Robbins |
| My Shoes Keep Walkin' Back to You | | Ray Price |
| Home of the Blues | | Johnny Cash |
| Walkin' After Midnight | | Patsy Cline |
| Knee Deep in the Blues | | Marty Robbins |
| Jailhouse Rock | | Elvis Presley |
| Bye Bye Love | | Everly Brothers |
| Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On | | Jerry Lee Lewis |
| All Shook Up | | Elvis Presley |
| The Story of My Life | | Marty Robbins |
| Give My Love to Rose | | Johnny Cash |

| TITLE | 1958 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Ballad of a Teenage Queen | | Johnny Cash |
| Billy Bayou | | Jim Reeves |
| City Lights | | Ray Price |
| All I Have to Do is Dream | | Everly Brothers |
| I Can't Stop Lovin You | | Don Gibson |
| Life to Go | | Stonewall Jackson |
| Guess They Happen That Way | | Johnny Cash |
| Bird Dog | | Everly Brothers |
| Pick Me Up On Your Way Down | | Charlie Walker |
| Don't | | Elvis Presley |
| Squaws Along the Yukon | | Hank Thompson |
| Come in Stranger | | Johnny Cash |
| Devoted to You | | Everly Brothers |
| Oh, Lonesome Me | | Don Gibson |
| Send Me the Pillow You Dream On | | Hank Locklin |
| The Ways of a Woman in Love | | Johnny Cash |

| TITLE | 1959 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| He'll Have to Go | | Jim Reeves |
| White Lightning | | George Jones |
| The Same Old Me | | Ray Price |
| Don't Take Your Guns To Town | | Johnny Cash |
| El Paso | | Marty Robbins |
| Waterloo | | Stonewall Jackson |
| The Battle of New Orleans | | Johnny Horton |
| When It's Springtime in Alaska | | Johnny Horton |
| Heartaches By the Number | | Ray Price |
| Long Black Veil | | Lefty Frizzell |
| I Got Stripes | | Johnny Cash |
| Under Your Spell Again | | Buck Owens |
| Am I That Easy to Forget? | | Carl Below |
| Scarlet Ribbons | | Browns |
| Frankie's Man Johnny | | Johnny Sea |
| Wishful Thinking | | Wynn Stewart |

| TITLE | 1960 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Wings of a Dove | | Ferlin Husky |
| Another | | Roy Drusky |
| Please Help Me I'm Falling | | Hank Locklin |
| (I Can't Help You) I'm Falling Too | | Skeeter Davis |
| Alabama | | Cowboy Copas |
| Window Up Above | | George Jones |
| Above and Beyond | | Buck Owens |
| I Missed Me | | Jim Reeves |
| North to Alaska | | Johnny Horton |
| You're the Only Good Thing | | George Morgan |
| One More Time | | Ray Price |
| Excuse Me | | Buck Owens |
| Why I'm Walking | | Stonewall Jackson |
| I'm Gettin Better | | Jim Reeves |
| Sink the Bismark | | Johnny Horton |
| Anymore | | Roy Drusky |

| TITLE | 1961 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Foolin' Around | | Buck Owens |
| I Dream of Hill Billy Heaven | | Tex Ritter |
| Tender Years | | George Jones |
| Hello Walls | | Faron Young |
| I Fall to Pieces | | Patsy Cline |
| I'd Rather Loan You Out | | Roy Drusky |
| Walk on By | | Leroy Van Dyke |
| Big Bad John | | Jimmy Dean |
| Under the Influence of Love | | Buck Owens |
| Signed, Sealed and Delivered | | Cowboy Copas |
| Losing Your Love | | Jim Reeves |
| Three Hearts in a Tangle | | Roy Drusky |
| Oklahoma Hills | | Hank Thompson |
| My Last Date (With You) | | Skeeter Davis |
| Soft Rain | | Ray Price |
| The Blizzard | | Jim Reeves |

| TITLE | 1962 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Devil Woman | | Marty Robbins |
| I've Been Everywhere | | Hank Snow |
| She Thinks I Still Care | | George Jones |
| Misery Loves Company | | Porter Wagoner |
| Charlie's Shoes | | Billy Walker |
| The End of the World | | Skeeter Davis |
| Don't Let Me Cross Over | | Carl Butler |
| P.T. 109 | | Jimmy Dean |
| The Ballad of Jed Clampet | | Flatt and Scruggs |
| A Little Bitty Tear | | Burl Ives |
| A Wound Time Can't Erase | | Stonewall Jackson |
| A Girl I Used To Know | | Geo. Jones |
| Woverton Mountain | | Clyde King |
| A Little Heartache | | Eddy Arnold |
| You're For Me | | Buck Owens |
| Adios Amigo | | Jim Reeves |

| TITLE | 1963 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Ring of Fire | | Johnny Cash |
| Detroit City | | Bobby Bare |
| Act Naturally | | Buck Owens |
| B. J. The D. J. | | Stonewall Jackson |
| Abilene | | George Hamilton IV |
| Talk Back Trembling Lips | | Ernest Ashworth |
| Six Days on the Road | | Dave Dudly |
| Lonesome 7-7203 | | Hawkshaw Hawkins |
| The Matador | | Johnny Cash |
| Sweet Dreams of You | | Patsy Cline |
| 500 Miles Away | | Bobby Bare |
| Love's Gonna Live Here | | Buck Owens |
| Mountain of Love | | David Houston |
| Ninety Miles an Hour | | Hank Snow |
| Guilty | | Jim Reeves |
| Still | | Bill Anderson |

| TITLE | 1964 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Understand Your Man | | Johnny Cash |
| Dang Me | | Roger Miller |
| My Heart Skips A Beat | | Buck Owens |
| Saginaw Michigan | | Stonewall Jackson |
| Don't Be Angry | | Stonewall Jackson |
| The Race is On | | Geo. Jones |
| It Ain't Me Babe | | Johnny Cash |
| Chug-A-Lug | | Roger Miller |
| Together Again | | Buck Owens |
| Burning Memories | | Ray Price |
| Cross The Bridge at Waco | | Billy Walker |
| Miller's Cave | | Bobby Bare |
| Sorrow on the Rocks | | Porter Wagoner |
| Your Heart Turned Left | | Geo. Jones |
| The Ballad of Ira Hays | | Johnny Cash |
| Four Strong Winds | | Bobby Bare |

| TITLE | 1965 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| King of the Road | | Roger Miller |
| This Is It | | Jim Reeves |
| What's he doing in My World? | | Eddy Arnold |
| Ribbon of Darkness | | Marty Robbins |
| Orange Blossom Special | | Johnny Cash |
| The First Thing Every Morning | | Jimmy Dean |
| May the Bird of Paradise Fly | | Little Jimmy Dickens |
| Yes, Mr. Peters | | Roy Drusky & Priscilla Mitchell |
| The D. J. Cried | | Ernest Ashworth |
| England Swings | | Roger Miller |
| Make the World Go Away | | Eddy Arnold |
| Is it Really Over? | | Jim Reeves |
| 10 Little Bottles | | Johnny Bond |
| The Other Woman | | Ray Price |
| Flowers on the Wall | | Statler Bros. |
| Yakety Axe | | Chet Atkins |

| TITLE | 1966 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Blue Side of Lonesome | | Jim Reeves |
| Take Good Care of Her | | Sonny James |
| I Want to Go With You | | Eddy Arnold |
| I Get the Fever | | Bill Anderson |
| The One on the Left is on the Right | | Johnny Cash |
| Don't Come Home a Drinkin' | | Loretta Lynn |
| The Bottle Let Me Down | | Merle Haggard |
| Tippy Toeing | | Hardeen Trio |
| The Tips of My Finger | | Eddy Arnold |
| Loser's Cathedral | | David Houston |
| Snow Flake | | Jim Reeves |
| Room in Your Heart | | Sonny James |
| Evil on Your Mind | | Jan Howard |
| Somebody Like Me | | Eddy Arnold |
| Swinging Doors | | Merle Haggard |
| Distant Drums | | Jim Reeves |

| TITLE | 1967 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| It's the Little Things | | Sonny James |
| Sam's Place | | Buck Owens |
| Here Comes Heaven | | Eddy Arnold |
| For Loving You | | Bill Anderson |
| By the Time I Get to Phoenix | | Glen Campbell |
| Walk Through This World With Me | | George Jones |
| Your Tender Loving Care | | Buck Owens |
| Jackson | | Johnny Cash |
| Turn the World Around | | Eddy Arnold |
| My Elusive Dreams | | David Houston |
| Where Does the Good Times Go? | | Buck Owens |
| Laura | | Leon Ashley |
| I Don't Wanna Play House With You | | Tammy Wynette |
| Sing Me Back Home | | Merle Haggard |
| Tonight Carman | | Marty Robbins |
| Rosanna's Gone Wild | | Johnny Cash |

| TITLE | 1968 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Daddy Sings Bass | | Johnny Cash |
| I Wanna Live | | Glen Campbell |
| Take Me to Your World | | Tammy Wynette |
| Honey | | Bobby Goldsboro |
| How Long Will My Baby Be Gone? | | Buck Owens |
| Harper Valley P.T.A. | | Jeannie C. Riley |
| Then You Tell Me Good-by | | Eddy Arnold |
| I Walk Alone | | Marty Robbins |
| D-I-V-O-R-C-E | | Tammy Wynette |
| The Legend of Bonnie & Clyde | | Merle Haggard |
| To Make Love Sweeter For You | | Jerry Lee Lewis |
| Wichita Lineman | | Glen Campbell |
| Stand By Your Man | | Tammy Wynette |
| Mama Tried | | Merle Haggard |
| Wild Weekend | | Bill Anderson |
| What's Made Milwaukee Famous | | Jerry Lee Lewis |

| TITLE | 1969 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Running Bear | | Sonny James |
| Galveston | | Glen Campbell |
| Johnny B. Good | | Buck Owens |
| Okie From Muskogee | | Merle Haggard |
| Singing my Song | | Tammy Wynette |
| Baby, Baby (I know you're a lady) | | David Houston |
| A Boy Named Sue | | Johnny Cash |
| Only the Lonely | | Sonny James |
| My Life | | Bill Anderson |
| Is Anybody Going to San Antone? | | Charley Pride |
| The Ways to Love a Man | | Tammy Wynette |
| Who's Gonna Mow Your Grass | | Buck Owens |
| A Week in a Country Jail | | Tom T. Hall |
| That's a No No | | Lynn Anderson |
| (I'm So) Afraid of Losing you Again | | Charley Pride |
| Games People Play | | Freddy Weller |

| TITLE | 1970 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Rose Garden | | Lynn Anderson |
| Sunday Morning Coming Down | | Johnny Cash |
| My Woman, My Woman | | Marty Robbins |
| He Loves Me All the Way | | Tammy Wynette |
| I Can't Believe that You've Stopped Loving Me | | Charley Pride |
| 15 Years Ago | | Conway Twitty |
| Coal Miners Daughter | | Loretta Lynn |
| There Must be More Love Than This | | Jerry Lee Lewis |
| Flesh & Blood | | Johnny Cash |
| For the Good Times | | Ray Price |
| Run, Woman Run | | Tammy Wynette |
| Long, Long Texas Road | | Roy Drusky |
| The Pool Shark | | Dave Dudley |
| If I were a Carpenter | | J. Cash & J. Carter |
| All for the Love of Sunshine | | Hank Williams Jr. |
| The Wonders You Perform | | Tammy Wynette |

| TITLE | 1971 | ARTIST |
|---|---|---|
| Bright Lights | | Sonny James |
| Carolyn | | Merle Haggard |
| You're My Man | | Lynn Anderson |
| Me & You & a Dog Named Boo | | Stonewall Jackson |
| How Much More Can She Stand | | Conway Twitty |
| Quits | | Bill Anderson |
| Good Lovin | | Tammy Wynette |
| It's Four in The Morning | | Faron Young |
| Man in Black | | Johnny Cash |
| Coat of Many Colors | | Dolly Parton |
| The Year that Clayton Delany Died | | Tom T. Hall |
| When You're Hot You're Hot | | Jerry Reed |
| She's All I Got | | Johnny Paycheck |
| One's on the Way | | Loretta Lynn |
| Would You Take Another Chance with Me | | Jerry Lee Lewis |
| Always Remember | | Bill Anderson |

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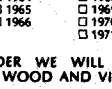

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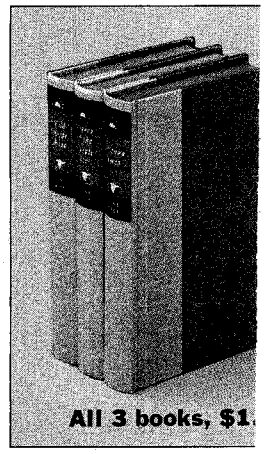


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